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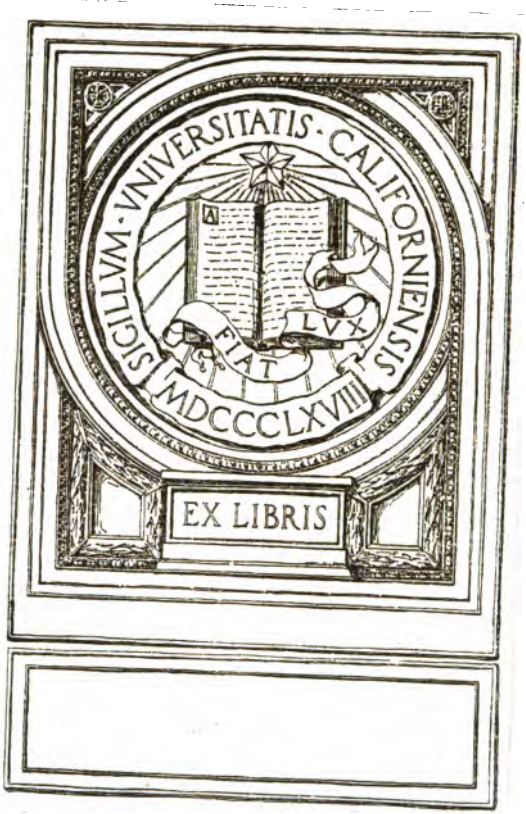
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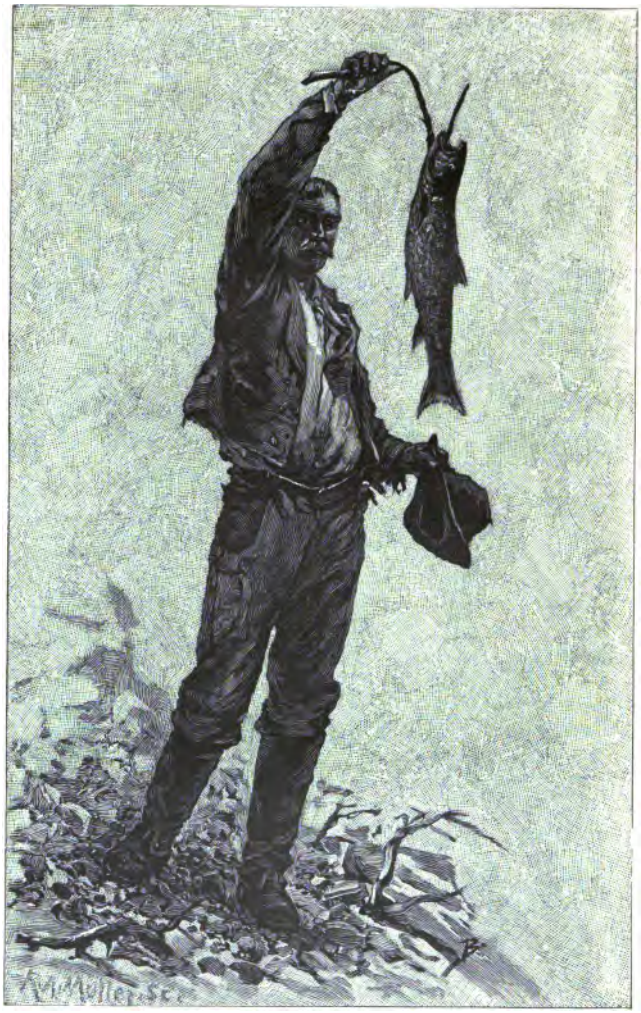

THE VOYAGEUR TYPE

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ANGLING

BY

LEROY M. YALE
J. G. A. CREIGHTON
A. R. MACDONOUGH
A. FOSTER HIGGINS
ROBERT GRANT
ALEXANDER CARGILL
CHARLES FREDERICK HOLDER

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1897

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GETTING OUT THE FLY BOOKS

By Leroy Milton Yale

WHEN spring seems still afar off, when nights are sharp, and patches of snow lie about, in spite of the frost the maple feels the sweet juices in all its fibres. The same nameless influence touches the angler. His blood moves; he has no more choice than the budding tree. He must see his fly-books. Every article of his outfit — creel, hob-nail, or rod — has its charm to rouse memory or quicken imagination; but in the book is hidden the subtlest spell of all. Move but a fly from its folds, and up swarm the recollections and the dreams — recollections of a past in which all joy is fresh, all disappointment forgotten; dreams of a future filled "much more

abundantly." Not dreams alone. To the observant angler, running brooks have indeed been books, and their stones have preached him sermons, the notes whereof lie in the pages of these same fly-books.

Said a witty friend: "It is extraordinary with what contempt your true angler looks upon any method which will really catch fish." The wit pierces near the heart of the matter. Any method which will only catch fish? Yes. The true angler is not he whose pole is but the weapon of his predatory instinct. The love of the art must be above the greed of prey. With the boisterous fisherman and the picnicker with a fishing-rod, we have no concern. But among actual sportsmanlike anglers the manifestations of the enjoyment of the recreation are as various as temperaments. Each exaggerates some of its pleasures; but he best realizes them whose rod is a divining wand, who has the widest sympathy with the outer world — whether it touch him through his scientific insight, his artistic sensibility, or that nameless poetic feeling which longs for the sunshine, the wind, and the rain. We may for a moment envy him who tells of great game taken from some far-off lake, but our hearts go out to him who bids us share his

little brook "when the Sanguinaria is in bloom."

It is curious to observe how surely this note of sympathy with nature was struck four hundred years ago, by Dame Juliana Berners, and how it reappears as a leading motive in the best of angling-books all the way down to our day, whether Walton discourses to his scholar or Norris is "fly-fishing alone." Curious, too, is the vein of moralizing which runs through the elder English writers on angling, whether from the fashion of the time or from direct imitation of Dame Juliana, their model in so many things else. Although criticism denies the authorship of "The Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle" to the Dame, one cannot doubt as he reads it, that it is the work of some ecclesiastic, who, naturally, would give first place to the only field sport permissible in those days to the cloth. It was almost an inspired foresight which placed the work in such connection that it would be read only by "gentyll and noble men," and kept out of "the hondys of eche ydle persone whyche wolde desire it yf it were enpryntyd allone by itself . . . to the entent that the forsayd ydle persones whyche sholde haue but lytyll mesure in the sayd dysporte of fysshyng

sholde not by this meane utterly dystroye it." The words in which the duties of an angler are expressed are as serious as, in our day, are deemed suitable to a marriage service or the installation of a pastor. Would that they all, from "I charge and requyre you in the name of alle noble men" to the closing benediction, "And all those that done after this rule shall haue the blessynge of god and saynt Petyr, whyche he theym graunte that wyth his precyous blood vs boughte," were burnt with the "plumers wire" into the memory of every greedy and ill-mannered angler.

An evidence of the solace that is found in angling is the fact that out of the troublous times of King and Parliament have come down to us at least three works on the art. Walton, who mourned his "monarch slain," Venables, whose disastrous West India campaign brought him to disgrace and the Tower, and the Cromwellian trooper, Richard Franck, wandering abroad, all consoled themselves with the rod and writing of its joys. Perhaps the chastening of sorrow joined with the gentle art to sweeten that charming letter which the Royalist Walton prefixed to the book of the Roundhead Venables. Charming books both have written; and

one wishes that the same could be said of Franck, for he was a better naturalist and "all-round" fisherman than either of them. But whatever may have been in his controversial heart, there is little of "sweetness and light" in his style.

Now to the fly-books. There is no reason why the fly-fisher should contemn his brother of the bait-rod. Often quite the reverse, if real angling skill be laid in the balance. The angler's circle is quite wide enough for every one who fishes in the true spirit, whether he casts his fly over the costliest of salmon pools, or anchors his punt across the head of a gudgeon swim. But there is room, also, for a proper regret that he who uses bait alone has never had opened to him all the delights of his pastime. Many places cannot be really fished with a fly. It is a legitimate matter of choice to decline to fish such places; but let the refusal be really from love of sport, and not from priggish affectation. There is good ground for Francis's hint that the degree of Master in Angling should be given only to a proficient in all its branches.

The advantages of the fly are obvious enough. It is always ready; bait must be procured for each occasion. "I wish,"

said a lady one day, "that you would teach my husband to use the fly, for I observe that when you desire to go a-fishing, you go; but he raises the whole village for four days to collect his baits." Besides, it is a gratification to avoid giving pain, even if slight, to living bait. A still greater practical advantage is that the fly does not mortally wound any fish, and such as (by reason of size or for any other cause) are not wanted for the basket may be returned to the water unharmed. Unharmed? Probably entirely so. In bait-fishing many an undesired fish is basketed because wounds of its gills or gullet make its survival improbable if it were returned to the water. But a fly is not swallowed unless a bait has been added to it. It goes no farther than the mouth, and — by trout at least — is instantly recognized as a deception; and if it has not been fastened at the moment of seizure, is immediately rejected. That the presence of a hook in the mouth of predatory fish causes little, if any pain, becomes more probable the more their behavior is watched. Their mouths being their only prehensile apparatus, we should expect these parts to be but slightly sensitive to pain; and such seems, from observation, to be really the case. Such fish often seize

and swallow others so protected with spines that the angler handles them with great caution. Most anglers of experience have seen a fish take a fly repeatedly, or take a second while still struggling to be free of the first; so that it was, perhaps, landed by two anglers at once. I have knowledge of a bluefish taking off three large hooks, baited for striped bass, and coming to gaff on a fourth, when all four were recovered from its mouth. For experiment's sake, the writer once caught, unhooked, and returned to the water, the same trout, four times within a few minutes (it being plainly visible all the time), and finally drove it out of the pool with a stick, lest it should swallow the bait and be destroyed, if it were allowed another opportunity. It may be said that in these two instances hunger overcame the fear of pain. But what shall be said of another experience of the writer, when, after playing a grilse for some minutes, and losing him, another cast brought to the fly a fish which proved to be the same one. The fly was fast in his lower jaw, while in his upper jaw a fresh and bleeding tear, half an inch in length, showed whence it had just broken away.

To the negative advantage of pain

avoided we may add the positive one that fly-fishing is, for many reasons, the most interesting form of angling. Fish take the artificial fly best when feeding upon the natural insects, which diet (as has been shown experimentally, for trout, at least) gives weight and strength more rapidly than any other. They are then more inclined to "sport," they fight harder, and, it may be added, are more valued for the table. The gratification is enhanced by the greater delicacy of tackle made possible by the flexibility and elasticity of the rod necessary to fly-casting; and it is certainly a greater pleasure to outwit the game by a clever imitation of a fly than by an actual gross lump of food. But the essential charm, we think, lies beyond the mere use of a fly; for trolling a fly is scarcely less lethargic than any other trolling, while minnow-casting is nearly as delightful as fly-casting. The gentle but continuous activity of fly-fishing gives it interest; the endeavor to put the fly accurately and delicately just where the angler would have it, makes it as absorbing as any trial of marksmanship. The fascinating suspense of waiting for the rising fish! (There is one under the azalea bush!) Out goes the fly toward the marked spot.

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A Quiet Spot

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(A yard more, and gently, or it is hung up.) The breathless seconds as it sweeps down over it, the restraint of the space of a heart's beat before the turn of the wrist, and then the struggle. These are the charms of fly-fishing the bait-fisher cannot share.

There must always be differences of taste as to what kind of fly-fishing is the highest branch of the art. In England and America trout-fishing has generally been put into the first place. Certainly nowhere can the skilful angler more fully bring into play all his resources. The game is small compared to a salmon, for instance; but the trout of much-fished waters becomes possessed of a knowledge, a cunning, and a wariness which are worthy of all respect, and the overcoming of which adds a mental exercise to the many other charms of this variety of angling. On asking an experienced friend which he thought the more enjoyable, salmon- or trout-fishing, I got the answer, "They cannot be compared. Trout-fishing is like a symphony—all is harmony. One can enjoy the sky, the air, the trees, the water, the tackle, and the fish; but when one is fast to a salmon, it is 'circus' all the time." This answer touches the essen-

tial difference; the gentle exercise typical of angling is replaced by a more laborious occupation, and the calm enjoyment by a struggle. To me at least, no such struggle has left such charming memories as have some hours of trout-fishing (what pictures they are!) when the capture was of so little moment that only the choicest fish went into the creel. The expression "Salmon-fishing spoils one for everything else" has often a truth beyond the speaker's intent. Any fishing which makes the capture of the fish, or of any particular fish, important, is so far "spoiled" as a recreation. Besides, the planning and the commercial details essential to securing salmon-fishing go far to remove it from the domain of sport to that of business.

Here, side by side, lie the book of salmon flies and a box of tiny duns and spinners for dry-fly fishing. In themselves they embody the contention of theories: up-stream or down-stream fishing, close imitation or "colorology," sunk-fly, or dry-fly. Warm discussion, earnest disputes, hot words, almost (strange accompaniments of the "gentle art"), have been stirred up by them, and all needlessly. The dissension is more about names than facts. Under the one title of fly-fishing

have been confused fly-fishing proper and what, for the sake of a name, I have called feather-baiting. In both, the lure is similar as to materials and structure; but the latter method in its principles and practice resembles fly-fishing proper no more than it does minnow-casting. In fact, the "fly-minnow," or "Alexandra," would serve very well as a type of this style of fishing. Between the two styles are many intermediate shades, but typical examples only are taken for illustration.

By fly-fishing proper I mean the method of the purist as practised, let us say, upon a Hampshire chalk-stream, with water clear and fine. As nearly as painstaking search for materials and exactness in tying can avail, his flies are reproductions in size, shape, and color of the actual insects usually found upon the stream to be fished. They are indeed marvels of delicate imitation. Upon the finest of casting lines he places usually but one fly, in order that it may float down stream in the most natural manner possible. Nor will he indulge in any aimless casting, any "chuck-and-chance-it" work, as he would style it. Patiently he awaits the rising of a feeding fish, marks its place as accurately as he can, gets well below, and casts his fly, still

dry, as lightly as he is able, above the point marked, and allows it to float without tug or strain jauntily down stream until it passes over the fish. If it is not taken, it is dried by a few casts in the air, and again put over the fish. If it is taken, there can be little doubt, not only from theory, but from comparative experiments, that it is taken for the natural fly of which it is the avowed counterfeit. This is, I think, fly-fishing in the strict sense of the term. In such streams, with fish made wary by long experience, to use coarse flies, to cast carelessly, or even to fish down stream, would probably put every neighboring fish off its feed, or drive it to the shelter of its hold. In our wilder waters, such nicety is not yet necessary, and may even be less successful than less exacting methods. But where it is applicable, the writer can testify that it adds to the other pleasures of fly-fishing the charm that always attends delicacy of manipulation and certainty of aim.

Note the differences between this kind of fly-fishing and the "feather-baiting." Take a salmon-fly, for instance. It is a combination in a conventional shape of colors — the result of experience or experiment — which resembles nothing that

the maker ever saw in nature; and if, as some maintain, it is taken by the salmon because it has seen something like it, that something was certainly not a natural fly. The salmon-fly is usually cast — as accurately and delicately as may be, of course — across the current, and swings in a curve down to the fish, half or wholly submerged. Coming in such a manner, it may possibly be taken for a larva, hardly for a fly, whatever be its color. What is true of the salmon-fly is at least equally true of all large flies which are intended to be worked "sink and draw." While this method cannot in strictness be considered fly-fishing, there can be no doubt of its success. Trout are often so wild as to have no suspicion of guile, when they will seize any object which attracts their attention. If the water is big, turbulent, or turbid, only a large and showy lure will be visible. There were some pools in the Nepigon in its less frequented days, where the best success attended, not salmon-flies even, but bass-flies of extraordinary gaudiness, and of a size to merit Foster's name of "the American half-ounce." What they took the fly for, if for anything in particular, may be a matter of doubt; probably simply as a prey which might furnish food.

More recently, an acquaintance has told me, that in a season of low water, when disappointment had been universal, he had good success in this river with the use of midge-flies and light casts.

This question, why the fly of the salmon-fly type is taken, has been much discussed in connection with salmon-fishing. Formerly, the belief that salmon never fed while in fresh water complicated the inquiry. The contrary being now well established, it is altogether probable that the fly is seized for examination as possible food. There is a curious difference between the ordinary behavior of a trout and a salmon. As a rule, a trout which takes a small fly, apparently in mistake for a living insect, rejects it almost instantly, if it can. The salmon, on the contrary, usually starts for his hold with the fly in his mouth, to examine it there, possibly because of a habit acquired while feeding upon crustacea in the sea. Whether a fresh-run fish takes a fly, or any given fly, on account of its resemblance in the water to some kind of food known at sea, is one of the open questions. But after the fish have been some time in fished water, they become usually much more wary. It is interesting to watch their behavior, which

seems sometimes to be the result of simple curiosity or possibly, of a halting between hunger and a timidity born of experience. For instance, casting over a pool in which the fish were easily seen, I have had a pair lying near each other rise cautiously, to inspect each new fly; rarely would they come twice to the same one. The keen-eyed gaffer, in his wrath, as they circled around each and retired, exclaimed, "Confound them! They don't mean to take it; they start from the bottom with their mouths shut." After a fish has run the gantlet of a score or two of pools it becomes very knowing, and few flies will move it. I recall a success with a fly tied with the avowed purpose of presenting an *outré* combination which would certainly be unfamiliar. It is hard, as has been said, to be sure whether, in such cases, it be curiosity or chastened greed that excites the fish. In some cases it must certainly be the latter. For instance, for a week the many and tantalizingly visible occupants of the "Hospital" pool—ill-omened name—resisted all the blandishments of my friend and myself, when, one evening, unexpectedly, they began rising very cautiously, following the fly as it went down stream, and only touching it as it was be-

ing drawn up for the back cast, as if the evidence of its departure excited them irresistibly to embrace a last chance. But whatever this motive be, it probably accounts for multitudes of instances in which somebody's "fancy," tied on the spot, brings up fish, after all the standard favorites have proved worthless. This success of the aforesaid fancies is too often "for this occasion only."

But there again are instances which lead to the belief that the fish sometimes rises through anger, aversion, or a desire to attack and drive away the fly. Here it is possible that a resemblance is seen to something which has elsewhere been an annoyance. Sometimes the reason of the anger is evident, as when a heavy male salmon makes open-jawed rushes at the casting-line which holds his mate captive. But ordinarily the reason of the attraction or annoyance excited by a fly must be merely a matter of conjecture. A friend of the writer, a very skilful and observant angler, relates the following instance: On one of those depressing days in which salmon are very abundant, plainly visible, and absolutely indifferent to the angler's solicitation, he laid down his rod, and, for experiment's sake, dragged or floated over

the head of an accessible fish, various salmon-flies fastened to a cord. One fly after another passed, apparently unnoticed, certainly unheeded, until the "Jock Scott" was used. Then the fish seemed to be uneasy. The experiment was repeated several times, and as often as this fly came over him his ordinary indifference gave place to disturbance; he would move himself, often turning his head away or moving sidewise, until the fly had passed. Whether this dislike was due to a resemblance of the fly to something else, or to a recollection of an unpleasant struggle with such a fly, can only be guessed. The sporting of salmon with leaves which float down stream, and with the appearance of which they must be quite familiar, seems to be due to pure frolic, like the circling "walk-arounds" of leaping trout, sometimes seen in an eddy.

About special flies this article has nothing to say. Out of the enormous list of special patterns of salmon-flies pertaining to various rivers, a certain peerage of "general" flies has been gathered by the suffrages of universal experience, and to it, from year to year, others are elevated. But the steady way in which these standard patterns displace the special ones from their

own strongholds forces one to believe that the latter had usually little else than tradition and local pride in their favor. Exceptionally, some peculiarity of light and water will give a real advantage to a local favorite; and when this advantage is associated with some singularity of color or structure, it is quite possible that the fly may resemble something known as food, or as an enemy to the salmon. But if one takes a dozen or twenty approved standard patterns, he cannot fail to notice that every one has some peculiarity — as brilliancy, striking color, or strong contrast — that makes it an object likely to attract attention in the water.

The pleasures of fly-fishing are not confined to those who have access to trout brooks and salmon rivers. The widespread black bass readily takes the fly; and many humbler fish, such as chub and sunfish, give good sport if the tackle be suitably light. Indeed, almost any fish that feeds near the surface will take the moving sunken fly, whether in fresh or salt water. The resources of the fisherman are much increased in the South by the use of the fly in shallow bays, harbors, and lagoons. Game fish of large size and excellent quality are thus taken in abundance. In

the North the pollack, the various herrings, shad, and white perch are among the most interesting of the fish to be so taken. Young bluefish in tideways give excellent sport; but their teeth are so destructive that a material stouter than feathers — such as bright-colored flannel — is needed to form the lure, if it is to last.

The fly-books are still full of untouched "heads of discourse," yet let us close them with but this remark: that he who ties his own flies, and makes his own rods and tackle, will have a keener personal interest in his pastime, and give it an additional pleasure which he may enjoy in the long winter evenings, when the weary man craves a light amusement.

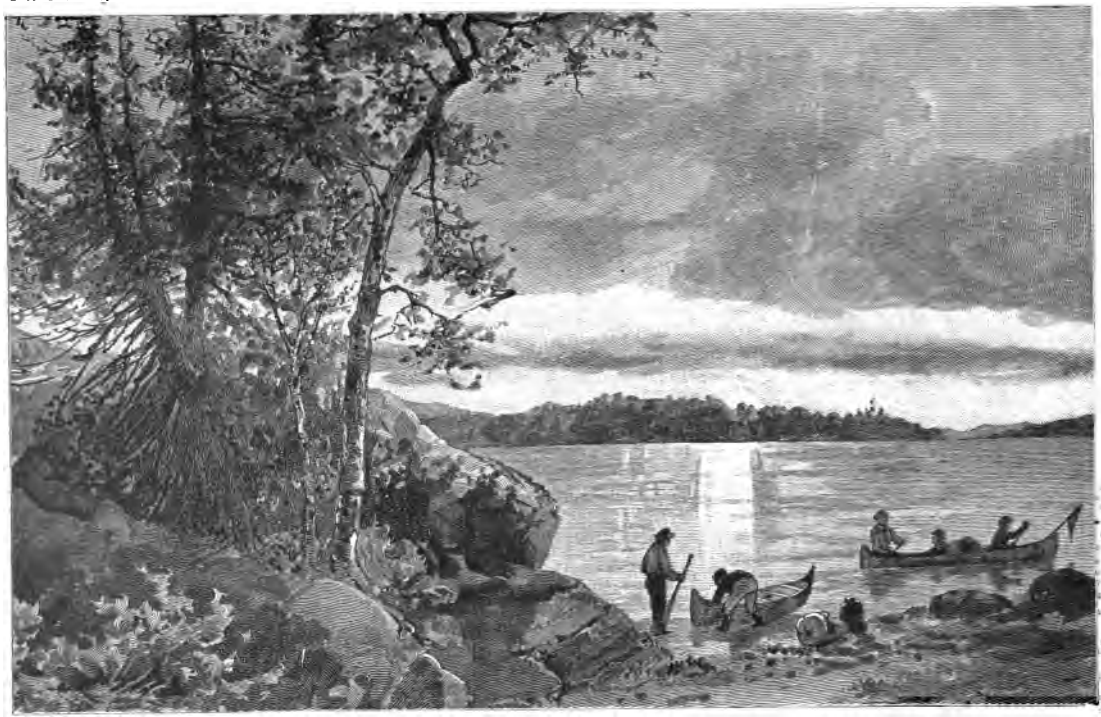
THE LAND OF THE WINANISHE

By Leroy Milton Yale and J. G. Aylwin Creighton

ABOUT one hundred miles nearly due north from Quebec lies Lake St. John, some twenty-six miles long by twenty wide. It is of no great depth, hence its Indian name, Pikouagami, or, "the Flat Lake," which expresses well the appearance of its shores and its function as a settling-basin for the silt of a dozen rivers which pour into it the waters of a tract the size of the State of Maine. Fed by innumerable lakes and streams, most of these rivers are large. Three of them — the Ashuapmouchouan, "the river where they watch the moose," the Mistassini, or "river of the great rock," and the Peribonca, "the curious river" — come from great lakes on the summit of the watershed between the St. Lawrence and Hudson's Bay, receive

large tributaries, are from 200 to 250 miles long, and are over a mile wide at their mouths, which are close together at the north-western end of the lake. The Ashuapmouchouan, the smallest of the three, is sometimes erroneously marked on maps as the upper part of the Saguenay; but this name really belongs to none of them. This immense volume of water, which raises the lake at times twenty-five feet, has but one outlet, divided for the first eight miles into two branches by Alma Island, at the foot of which the Grande Décharge, after a circuit of twelve miles in mighty rapids, unites with the Petite Décharge — straighter, and held in check by dams for the safe passage of timber — to form La Décharge du Lac St. Jean, a mighty stream, which, after a turbulent course of some thirty miles more, wrenches asunder the syenite at Les Terres Rompues, seven miles above Chicoutimi, and expanding into fjord-like reaches, becomes the Saguenay.

Near the lake the scenery is tame; but beyond the boundaries of the prehistoric sea, which probably discharged by the St. Maurice instead of by the Saguenay, there is a land of mountain and forest, lake and river. The ranges are low, except up the



Lake St. John — An Early Start

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Peribonca and to the south, where the Laurentians are massed; but every stream cuts its way in falls and rapids of great size, beauty, and endless variety.

This region was better known to the French colonists two centuries ago than it is to the average Canadian to-day. Traders had their eyes on the supposed El Dorado as early as Roberval's ill-fated expedition in 1543; and as soon as Champlain established La Nouvelle France, the post at Tadoussac attracted the Indians from the upper Saguenay. The "Relations des Jésuites" for 1647 and 1652 give accounts of Père De Quen's voyages to Lake St. John. In the Relation of 1658, the various river routes to Hudson's Bay are described with much greater accuracy than in the would-be discoveries of sensational writers of the present time. In 1661, Fathers Gabriel Druillettes and Claude Dablon, in "the first voyage made toward the Northern Sea," got as far as Lake Nikoubau, at the head of the Ashuapmouchouan, where a great trading-fair was held annually by the Indians. But for fear of the Iroquois, who were then on the war-path, they would have anticipated Père Albanel's journey to Hudson's Bay in 1672. In 1680 an adventurer named Peltier had a trading-post at Nikoubau.

It was not till 1842 that the expiration of the lease of the King's Posts to the Hudson's Bay Company, the successors of the Northwest Company and of the farmers of the Domaine du Roi, ended two centuries of monopoly which had represented the region to be an Arctic desert. But the energy of the Prices, "the Lumber Kings," and of colonization societies formed in the counties along the lower St. Lawrence, among the descendants of the Normans and Bretons, who gave English blood its strongest strain of adventure, has filled the triangle between Ha Ha Bay, Chicoutimi, and Lake St. John with thickly settled parishes, and strung out a chain of settlements round the south and west shores of the lake to 120 miles from Chicoutimi. Except the missions and posts which connected Tadoussac with Mistassini and Hudson's Bay, there was not a settlement on the Saguenay till 1838. Ten years later the colonists were at Lake St. John, and in 1888 the population was over 40,000. Protected from the cold winds of the Gulf, with a climate and winter better and shorter than at Quebec, and a soil in which the long hot days of the brief Northern summer bring to quick maturity such semi-tropical products as maize, melons, hemp,

tobacco, etc., the region has developed slowly, because so isolated. To get to Quebec there were the Saguenay steamers in summer, or a long round over the mountains by roads impassable for weeks in autumn and spring, and running through a hundred miles of wilderness.

But whatever value the region may have for the settler, or charms for the eye of the tourist, it has for the angler an unique attraction,—it is the land of the winanishe. And what is a winanishe?

The winanishe — or ouinaniche, according to French spelling — is a fish, and a fish of great interest to both naturalist and angler. The etymology of the name, which is said to be Indian for "saumon de l'eau douce," * is untraceable in either Montagnais or Cree: the most probable derivation is that which assigns it to an Indian attempt to pronounce "saumon," with the addition of the well-known diminutive "ishe." This exactly describes the fish, — the little salmon, — for to the naturalist it is simply an Atlantic salmon of small size, which is not anadromous; that is, does not periodically run up from the sea. The same fish is found in parts of Maine, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and known as the land-locked salmon, and is probably identical with the land-locked salmon of Sweden. *Salmo salar, variety Sebago,* is its scientific name, the latter part of the appellation coming from a lake in Maine where it attains its greatest size. The identity of the winanishe with the *Salmo salar* is quite settled by its anatomy. Size and color, always

* The meaning here assigned to the word winanishe is probably erroneous. In a later article Mr. Creighton thinks it "probably derived from the Cree root 'wan,' to lose or mistake, applied either to the fish having lost itself, or being taken for a salmon." In Ojibway, a closely allied tongue, *wani* in composition always means mistake or error; and *nin waninishka* would mean, I go around, or by a circuitous route. Whether there is any real etymological connection, however, is hard to say. — L. M. Y.

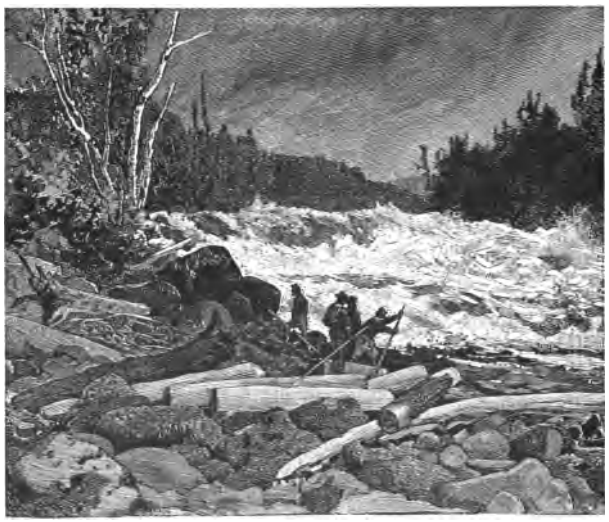
uncertain and variable characteristics in the *Salmonidæ*, are affected by locality; and the habits of a fish are adapted, if possible, to surroundings. The real problem in each case of "land-locking" is how it happened, which cannot be discussed here.

In the Saguenay there is no reason why the fish should not go to the sea; in fact, they do descend to the tideway in large numbers every spring with the heavy floods, but whether they remount is as yet undetermined. The falls and heavy rapids may be insuperable even for their activity and strength, but we are inclined to think they return to spawn in the Décharge. Stray individuals have been caught in the Saguenay Rivers, at Tadoussac, and even in the St. Lawrence above the Saguenay; but they are the exception which proves the rule that the winanishe is peculiar to Lake St. John and its streams.* In the lake itself they are abundant in spring. When the high water begins to fall they approach the shores, and are taken in great numbers at the mouths of the rivers. In June the great body of the fish seem to descend into

* This statement must be now modified. In 1889 Mr. Creighton observed them in the Musquarro and other Labrador streams, and more recently it has been found to be pretty generally distributed through that peninsula, especially in streams which empty considerable lake areas. They have been found even in the Hamilton River, above the Grand Falls. — L. M. Y.

the Grande Décharge, — before the barring of the Petite Décharge they descended it also, — and are found feeding on flies and small fish in the great eddies, a few lying among the rocks along the rapids.

So far their movements correspond exactly with Mr. Atkins's observations at the Schoodic Lakes. But it is uncertain whether, as there, they reascend and come down again in October to spawn. Part probably do go back to the lake, and part spawn in the Décharge. In September they are found in the rivers running into the lake, and spawn in October on the



The head of the Vache Caille Rapid.

gravelly shallows of these rivers. Besides those to which Lake St. John is the sea, there are winanishe which seem to live and spawn in the upper waters of the large rivers, and in the lakes from which these flow. They are of much larger average size in these lakes, but refuse the fly at all seasons, and can be taken only by bait or trolling. In all probability the fish has a wide range to the north, but confusion of nomenclature, the rare opportunity for skilled observation, and the difficulty of getting reliable information from Indians and lumbermen, leave a good field for investigation.

Now let us see what points the winanishe has for the angler, who regards the look and ways of a fish rather than its bones. In appearance a fresh-run salmon and a fresh-run winanishe do not differ much more than salmon from different rivers. The back of a winanishe is greener blue, and in a fish just out of water can be seen to be marked with olive spots, something like the vermiculations on a trout; the silvery sides are more iridescent; the X-marks are more numerous and less sharply defined; the patches of bronze, purple, and green on the gill-covers are larger and more brilliant, and with them

are several large round black spots. As the water grows warm, the bright hues get dull, and toward autumn the rusty red color and hooked lower jaw of the spawning salmon develop. As the winanishe, unlike the salmon, feeds continuously, and in much heavier and swifter water than salmon lie in, it has a slimmer body and larger fins, so that a five-pound winanishe can leap higher and oftener than a grilse, and fight like a ten-pound salmon. The variety of its habits, which are a compound of those of the trout and those of the salmon, with some peculiarities of its own, gives great charm to winanishe-angling, and opportunity for every style, from the "floating fly" on tiny hooks to the "sink and draw" of the salmon cast. It takes the fly readily when in the humor, though wary and capricious, like all its relations, and fights hard, uniting the dash of the trout with the doggedness and ingenuity of the salmon.

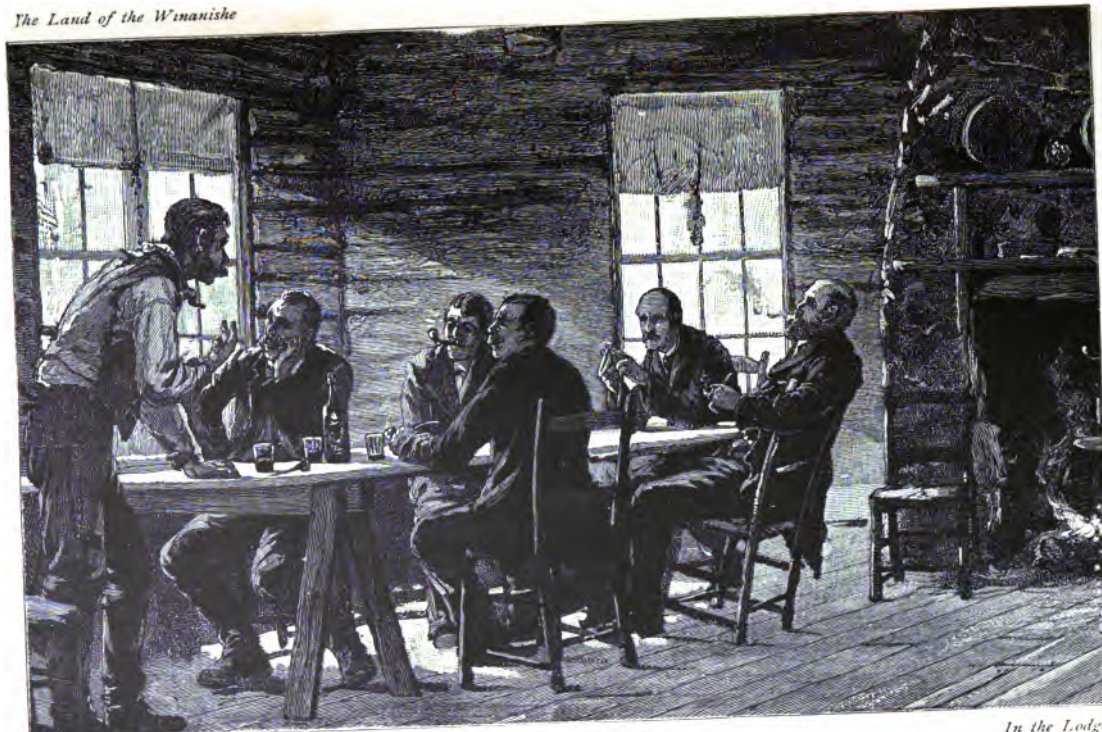
In railway and hotel prospectuses, the winanishe weighs from five to fourteen pounds. In Lake St. John and the Décharge, the average is two and a half; four-pounders are large, and not too plentiful, while six-pounders are scarce. The winanishe is, however, much longer than a

trout of the same weight; a five-pounder, for example, is twenty-five inches long, twelve in girth, and looks like an eight-pound salmon. Now and then solitary fish of great size are seen, old *habitants* dating from "les premières années" when "ça en bouillait, Monsieur, des grosses comme des carcajous" (it just boiled, sir, with ones as big as wildcats); but they are intensely wary, and carefully guarded by the demon of ill-luck. Oh, the agonizing memory of that winanishe which, after a two hours' fight, made even tough old Theodose lose his head and — the fish! Mr. David Price is credited with an eleven-pounder, — the Prices always did things on the largest scale, — but among some thousands we have seen only one seven-pounder. With a rod of eight to ten ounces, one gets almost the excitement of salmon-fishing — without its hard work and vexation of spirit; for the number and gameness of the fish make up for the smaller size. They are unfortunately decreasing fast, both in number and weight. In the Grande Décharge, where, on account of the winanishe's peculiar ways, the pools were always few in proportion to the extent of water, there are but a few places now where a day's sport is certain,

and these are in private hands. Settlement and netting in the lake have had a great effect, and the opening up of markets by the railway will hasten the extinction of this beautiful game fish.

Until recently the Décharge could be reached only by the way of Chicoutimi. There the traveller had a choice of routes. To the angler who finds more joy in the haunts of fish than in fishing, the ascent of the Saguenay by canoe is well worth the time taken from his angling; but the man who dislikes rough water and rocky portages must take a tedious drive of sixty miles *via* Hébertville. Last year the completion of the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway as far as the lake afforded a new route, which we took, partly to see the country and partly to make sure of being on the water before the winanishe, which, as becomes a fish peculiar to so French-Canadian and devout a region, makes a point to spend the national feast-day, St. John the Baptist, with his expectant friends; or, failing to keep this tryst, that of St. Peter and St. Paul, which for obvious reasons seems the more appropriate time.

Early on a mid-June morning — if indeed in that latitude and season any hour



In the Lodge

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can be called early — we met at the railway station at Quebec. The first fifty miles of the road sweeps off to the west through a fairly settled farming country. As there is nothing of especial interest without, we turn to that solace of the traveller, the time-table and map.

All roads led to Rome, all new railways run to the "Sportsman's Paradise." As he reads the old familiar tale, our reactionist — who envies the Jesuits because they got here before him, and died before railways were known — says something about "beholding heaven and feeling hell" and "sportsmen's curse." But perhaps he means the mosquitoes, black flies, and sandflies; they are plentiful. So are trout, and big ones too — in due place and season. The prospectus, however, is judiciously reticent as to these details, leaving the stranger to learn them for himself, along with colloquial French and the ways of Indian guides.

But what an epitome of Canadian history is this little list of stations! Here and there an Indian name survives, telling of the original inhabitants. Valcartier, Roberval, and Stadacona carry us back to the first bold but fruitless attempt of the sixteenth century, while Hébertville is a

monument to the Curé who led the settlers of Lake St. John, and incidentally to the fecundity of the first *hàbitant* of the New France of Champlain. Dablon and De Quen now stand side by side on the railway-table, as those names did once in the roll of the Societas Militans. And how are the old trapper and to-day's man of business confronted in Lac Gros Visons and Skroder's Mills!

From the Rivière à Pierre to De Quen is a stretch of more than one hundred miles which, except for the railway, is an unbroken wilderness. Occasionally the train halts for a sportsman whose canoe waits at the lake beside which we are running. The valley of the wild river Batiscan leads up to the head of Lac Edouard, where we dine and are told tales of wonderful trout-fishing to be had for the asking, as the lake is leased by the railway company. At the end of the afternoon we arrived at a cross-road, which at that unfinished state of the line was "nowhere in particular," * but presented the only feasible way of getting to the highway which, skirting the lake, gives

* The road has since been completed; and the region, with its railway, its tiny boats on Lake St. John and adjacent waters, its hotels and rush of summer visitors, is now about as sophisticated as the Adirondacks. But the winanishe still survives.

access to the parishes east and west. Passengers and luggage were deposited upon a rocky bank, at the foot of which, in a slough, were gathered a goodly number of *quatre roues*, — the buck-boards of the locality, a seat in the middle of a plank, with a rude and jointless chaise-top above. After a due amount of haggling, we found transport through two miles of hub-deep mud to the village of Pointe aux Trembles, one of the many of that name in the province, and were left at "Poole's," "le vrai hôtel pour les Messieurs," a freshly made log house hurried up by the energy of the proprietor, who had for some time moved along with the railway.

It was an evening's work to find conveyance to St. Joseph d'Alma on the Petite Décharge, within which parish our fishing lay. If an arrangement were concluded, it would then turn out that half a day was wanted to mend the wagon, or to send for a set of harness. The little crowd which always gathers on such important occasions was so actively and volubly interested that it was hard to get in a word of our own. The claims of rival candidates were warmly discussed by their respective friends. "It is not everybody who should pretend that he is capable of conducting Messieurs,

who, as one easily sees, are truly des Messieurs." Everybody, however, was "bēn gréyé" (well-rigged). One driver had a buck-board and great experience: "It is he, sir, who drove un grand Monsieur de Bāston, two years ago," and perhaps he could get a neighbor's horse. Another had one of the finest mares in the parish, but it was keenly debated whether her foal could make the journey. A third could borrow a *quatre roue*, "a fine one, all but the wheels;" but then one always risks something, and what easier than for the Messieurs to hire another on the way if some accident arrives: it is not as with poor men, *par exemple*, who must look at five cents.

However, we got off in good time next morning. As we passed the village church the congregation was gathering for the weekly gossip before service, discussing the notices which the *huissier* (bailiff and crier) was affixing to the church doors, and — there was an election coming — anticipating the political orations after mass, which afford keen excitement for the argumentative and voluble *habitant*.

The road lies pleasantly near the border of the lake, and its course can be traced right and left, round the oval contour, by the slender white thread of houses on the

slopes that lead from the broad sand beaches to the low hills which close in the landscape on three sides. At intervals the sparkle of tin-covered spires shows where the churches bring the wide-scattered parishes to a focus. To the west a snowy patch, visible from all round the lake, like the topsail of a ship hull down, marks the three-hundred-feet fall of the Ouiatchouan; Ile des Couleuvres and Ile de la Traverse appear only as stripes of lighter green against the dark forests of the mainland; Roberval is high enough, on its slaty bed studded with corallites and madrepores, to be seen as a cluster of white dots; but Pointe Bleue is a mere bank of indigo cloud on the far horizon, and only an Indian's eyes could distinguish the Hudson's Bay Post and the buildings on the Indian Reserve from the crests of the waves which even a light summer breeze raises so fast and high. An outpost flash from the church of St. Prime just indicates where, at the mouth of the Ashuapmouchouan, Fathers Druillettes and Dablon started "on the road to enter for good and all into the lands of Sathan;" but northward there is nothing but water and sky, for the sand dunes and *savannes* of the unsettled northern shore are far below the horizon. East-

ward the long curve of yellow sand, banded red and black with beds of iron ore rich in garnets, ends in the low blue bluffs and rocky islets that guard the mouths of the Décharges, and is backed by the wooded ridge between the lake and the Saguenay, over which rise the distant peaks that border the Shipshaw.

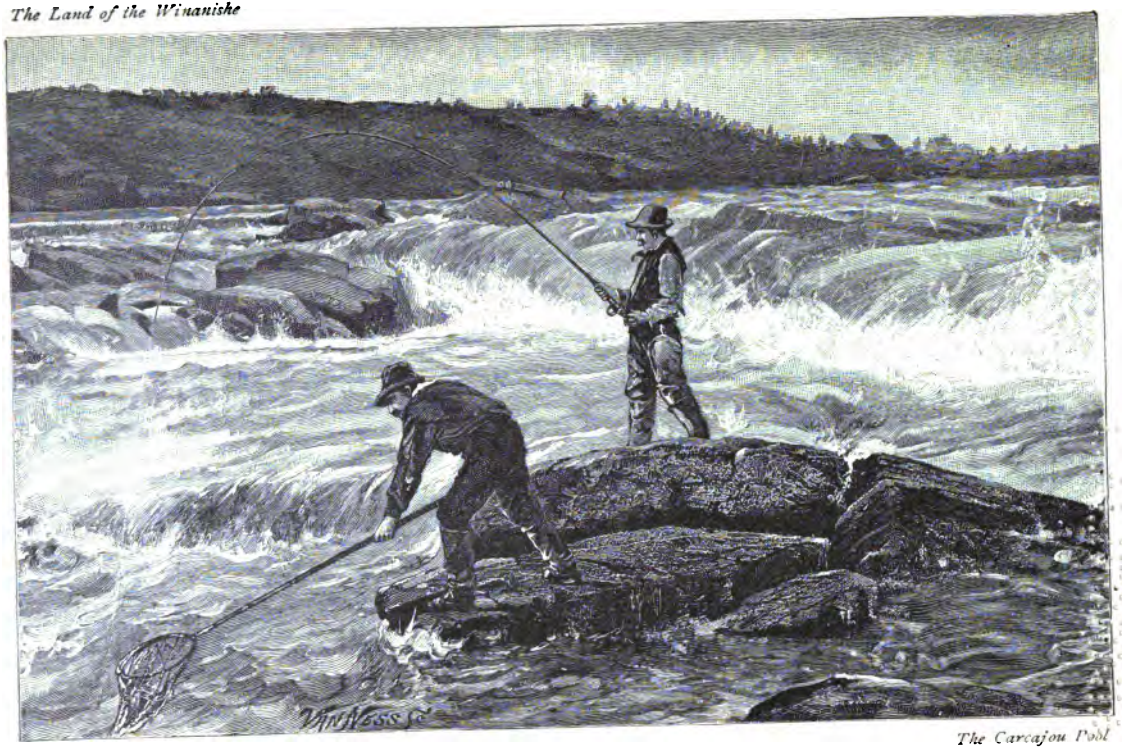
The houses differ little from the ordinary French-Canadian farmhouses of other sparsely settled districts. Built of squared logs well calked with the beaten bark of the white cedar, or with oakum, they are frequently sheathed with large pieces of birch-bark held in place by hand-split laths of cedar, while the curved-eaved roof, in default of shingles, is covered in the same manner. The barns are often thatched with straw; but the outbuildings frequently present a greater appearance of thrift than the houses. One picturesque outbuilding always catches the eye,—the oven. That altar of weekly burnt-offering which was the glory of the New England kitchen, is here set up out-of-doors, as if to give it the sanctity of isolation. On a substructure of logs the oven is built of stones plastered over with clay; over all, if the family can afford it, is a pent-roof of boards.

Galloping up and down the short, rough hills jolted us smartly, and a bag of angler's valuables was missed some miles on our way. Thereupon ensued a wordy war between the carter and the passenger whose command of *habitant* French was most nearly equal to the occasion. "It does not do to offend the Bon Dieu," said the carter solemnly; "this has come of not hearing mass before starting." His opponent maintained that the loss was due to the most patent carelessness in tying. The bystander was impressed by the frequently recurring "Sacré bateau," probably an invocation of the original "vessel of wrath;" but he was presently left with the luggage while the disputants drove back to search for the bag. When the returning vehicle was visible through the mosquito-cloud, it was evident that the search had been successful; and as it drew near, the conversation had softened down from an interchange of "gros mots" to a discussion of responsibility and criminal negligence.

The vehicle reloaded, the discussion was resumed; and the carter, finding his legal footing very insecure, as his adversary was a man of law, shifted to moral grounds. Turning his back upon his horse, whose pace was an entirely safe one, he proposed

to argue the matter out, with the bystander as the judge. Proposition first: There is one God, for rich and poor, for Protestant and Catholic alike. Accepted without objection. Second: It is the duty of all to worship him. Therefore the bag fell off because the driver had not assisted at mass. Here the advocate demurred. "If you neglected the mass it was of your own free will, and the responsibility abides with you."—"Nay," responded the carter, "I am poor; I must have bread for my wife and children. God grants this liberty to the poor, and the responsibility recoils upon the rich who offer to hire me, and who can afford to wait." And so the debate waged till the steep bank of the river Metabetchouan brought it to a close. The rope ferry took us across, and a few miles more brought us to a belated dinner at St. Jerome. The afternoon wore away without incident, while the road took us across La Belle Rivière, that old highway of the Jesuit missionaries, and by St. Gédéon.

The rustic mind seems everywhere to have a common trait,—an inability to give accurate and clear information concerning the road you wish to travel. If we asked the distance to any point, one responded,



The Carcajou Pool

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"Di (deux) lieues;" another, "Trois lieues et encore;" and the third, "Trois pipes," the time required to smoke a pipe being a measure of distance. As everything in that country is governed by the inexorable "coutume," it is possible that the size of pipes and the quality of tobacco are sufficiently uniform to be thus used. On one occasion only did the group questioned agree, and then they sent us several miles out of our way. Finding this out, we debated turning back, when a passer-by directed us to proceed, and to cross a certain bridge which would bring us back to our road more quickly. On nearing the bridge we were warned that it was impassable from the high water. Our informant further insisted that we should return several miles, as M. M——, the proprietor, no longer allowed passing across his fields, and had that day so announced from the church steps; and, as the tenant of M. M——, he was bound to obstruct us.

Despite his shrill remonstrance, we persevered in our trespassing. As we crossed the farm, our carter was moved to a flight of eloquence. His wrathful thought went back to the old man who had sent us down to the bridge. "What liars they are, gentlemen, in this parish! Why did that

old man send us to the bridge? To ingulf us, gentlemen. I assure you, gentlemen, it was such as he who crucified our Lord." Instead of the expected angry remonstrances, we received a warm welcome from M. M——, who claimed acquaintance with the advocate, on the strength of an altercation about a fishing-license some eight or ten years before. Some parish politics were discussed; but our names were not on the voting-list, and we were soon bidden good-day. But we were already descending the Petite Décharge within hearing of its roar, and soon we had come into the village, had spoken with some of the handsome black-eyed boys, one of whom assured us that "les ouinaniches sautent," and had called on the postmaster. Two miles farther brought us opposite to the great Vache Caille Eddy, across which, on the point of Alma Island, stands the end of our journey, Alma Lodge, the home of the Saguenay Club, a well-built log house, with all that is necessary to the comfort of a real angler, and free from the vexatious non-essentials of "fancy" sporting-clubs. A signal brought a canoe, and we were presently safely across before daylight had gone. We had been twelve hours in doing thirty-five miles; but then,

as our driver remarked, "One can only do one's best; the Bon Dieu has not made a horse to trot always."

Next morning we start for our fishing with a "bonne chance, Messieurs," from the guardian's pretty wife, a black-eyed, olive-complexioned girl of sixteen. The housekeeping and *cuisine* of the lodge attest

The Point of Ile Maligne.

the practical teaching of the Ursuline Convent at Roberval; the accomplishments appear in wonders of silk embroidery on hunting-shirts, and in the trained voice which enlivens her work with *chansons*. We have to walk to the head of the Vache Caille Rapid, which runs in front of the lodge.

Two of the canoemen, putting their canoes on their heads almost as easily as their hats, have gone on; their mates wait for the rods and traps. A fine quartette they are, French-Canadians all, of the *voyageur* type, with all the skill of the Indian in woodcraft, and ten times his courage; brown and strong from trapping and lumbering all their lives; grave and serious looking, but with a keen vein of humor; shrewd and hard bargaining, but thoroughly honest; unable, perhaps, to write their names, but with a genuine polish of manner which compels respect by its dignified deference. One can make companions and friends of such men as these. Their costume is simple enough. Home-made trousers of the home-woven gray woollen *étoffe du pays* tucked into the wrinkled legs of the long moccasins tied below the knee, which, in contradistinction from town-made "bottes françaises,"

The Mouth of the Ouiatchouaniche River

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are known as "bottes sauvages;" a flannel shirt, with a gay kerchief in a broad fold over the chest; a soft felt hat of Protean shapes and uses, with a cherished fly or two stuck in the crown,—perhaps, if "la blonde" is near her "cavalier," a feather or a wild-flower in the band.

The volume of the rapids, the swiftness, complexity, and heavy swirls of the currents, make canoeing most exciting, and at times a little dangerous, on these waters. They are too deep for the use of setting-poles, and everything depends on strength and skill with the paddle. Mounting the Grande Décharge, when it is fifteen feet above summer level, and running like a mill-race, is hard work. But, taking advantage of every eddy, gripping rocks with hand and paddle, handing along by the tops of the submerged alders, passing between branches of overhanging trees undermined by the current, by sheer dint of hard paddling we get up a mile and a half. Now for the *traverse*. The canoe sweeps down and across in a beautiful curve, head up stream, with the paddles flashing like lightning, except when a *tourniquet* catches her and spins her half round a circle, while Joseph with a sidelong sweep decapitates a wave which threatens

to lop over the gunwale. "Un animal d'un tourniquet," he says, pointing to the funnel-shaped whirl swiftly gyrating down stream, the air-bubbles hissing through the yellow water like the bead in a glass of champagne. We are nearly half a mile down when the canoe swings with a sharp shock into the up-eddy on the opposite shore.

"C'est la place de péche, Monsieur," says Narcisse, easing off the grip of his teeth on his pipe; and Joseph, having finished drinking out of the rim of his hat, remarks that "on a coutume de prendre des grosses ici." Winanishe, like trout, are of the fair sex in French, and are roughly classified into "petites," "belles," and "grosses."

This is the famous "Remou de Caron," or Caron's Eddy. The big white waves surging round the rocky island, which later on will become a point covered with bushes, are the tail of the Caron Rapid, a crooked and dangerous one, because of the height of its waves and the size of its *tourniquets* or whirlpools, which suck down sawlogs as if they were chips, casting them up a couple of hundred yards farther down, to be caught in the eddies and swept again and again through the wild

rush of water, until the ever-changing set of the current tosses them on the rocks, or carries them off down stream. Pool, in the angler's usual understanding of the term, there is none; for the deep river, over a quarter of a mile wide, is totally unlike a salmon or trout stream. At first he is rather bewildered by the interlacing currents running in every direction, bearing along streaks of froth, which gathers in patches as dazzling as snow, that revolve slowly for a minute or two, then suddenly dissolving, go dancing in long white lines over the short ripples.

"Ça saute, Monsieur:" no splash marks the rise, but a broad tail appears and disappears where a winanishe is busy picking flies out of the foam; then another and another still. They are "making the tour" round the whole system of minor eddies and currents, sometimes staying a minute in some large patch of froth where the flies are thick, sometimes swimming and rising rapidly in a straight current line, and finally going out on the tops of the long glassy rollers at the tail of the main eddy into the white water of the main current, which carries them back again to the other end of the *remou*. The fish when fresh-run make these feeding-

The End of Canoe Journey.

tours frequently during the day, but only in the morning and evening when they have grown fat and lazy and the water is warm. At other times, when on the feed, they rise as the patches of *broue* float over their lairs. Except in swift and shallow water, where they are seldom found, or when coming with a rush from the bottom of a deep hole among the rocks, they do not leap for the fly like trout; they take it like salmon, on the downward turn, gently and deliberately. The salmon-cast, with a medium-sized salmon-fly, is therefore the most effective. Jock Scott, Curtis, Popham, Silver Doctor, and Donkey are all good flies, the first named being always a stand-by. Yellow and black seems the favorite combination; gray comes next, but red meets with little favor. The silver-bodied flies are best at

high water; at a low and bright stage, trout-flies come into play.

A patch of *broue* comes swirling along, with a fish in it. It requires a quick hand to put the fly where it will do most good. To a novice it is much like fishing "on the wing," but practice shows where to expect the fish. The rod — preferably a light, strong trout-rod, with fifty yards of line on a good check-reel — swings, and out goes the fly, which is allowed to sink a few inches, and is then drawn in with a succession of slow and short jerks, not trailed on the surface. The fish, however, is now five yards farther away, and on the other side of the canoe. This constant change in length and direction of cast is one of the main difficulties, as it is one of the excitements, of winanishe-angling. But here come three together — "un beau gang," to use Joseph's anglicism. The fly falls at the end of a straight line; a momentary thrill follows a gentle pull; you strike with the orthodox turn of the wrist, — and then blank reaction. The drift of the canoe, or the insetting current, has slackened the line, and the fish has been missed. "C'est dommage, Monsieur, vous l'avez piquée." The fish evidently is piqued in every sense of the term, and will

have no more of your flies. Another such experience will make him a marked misanthrope all summer.

When you strike, it must be hard, for their mouths are hard; but, as in salmon-fishing, no rule can be laid down beyond the golden one to keep a taut line. Though no fish are visible, you cast right and left. Presently, while quietly reeling in an excess of line, down goes the rod-tip with a smart jerk; there is a terribly long pause of about half a second, then the reel sings, and thirty yards off a silver bar flashes through the air three or four times in quick succession, for it is a fresh-run fish hooked in a tender spot. You recover a little line, then out it goes again with more pyrotechnics. At the end of ten or fifteen minutes he comes in meekly, with an occasional remonstrance, and you think it time for the net. The leader shows above water, and the rod curves into a semicircle; but no strain you can put on raises the fish farther, which circles slowly around. A sudden dash under your feet drags the rod-tip under water, but is foiled by a quick turn of the canoe. Then a telegraphic circuit seems to have been established through your tired arms to your spine. The fish is standing on his head, worrying the fly

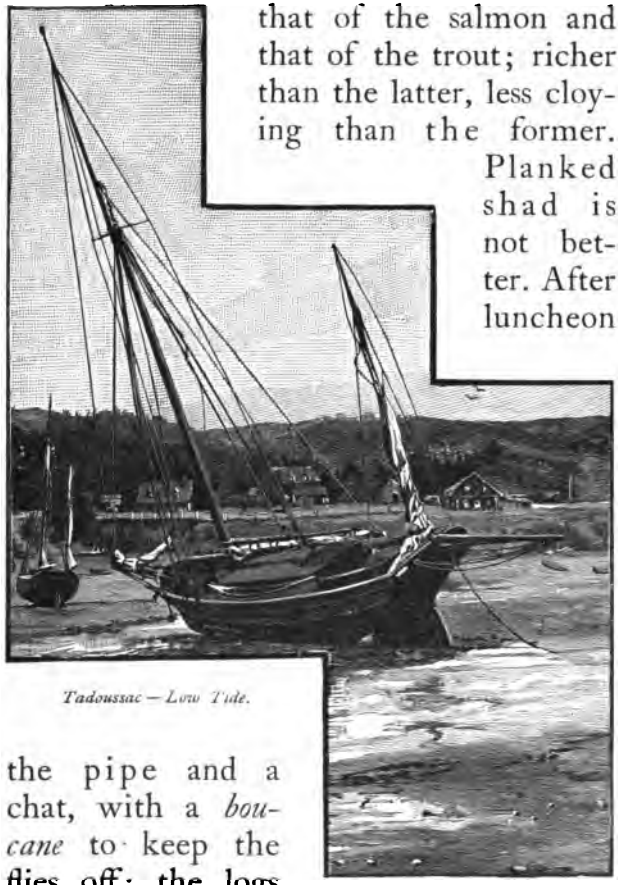
like a bull-dog, and slapping at the leader with his tail. All at once the rod springs back, and you are heavily splashed by a leap almost into your face. This occurs half a dozen times. He may jump into the canoe, perhaps over it; we have seen a winanishe caught in the air in the landing-net after it had shaken the fly out of its mouth. He is far more likely, however, to smash rod or tackle, unless you lower the tip smartly. Some more runs may follow, or a sulking fit. The more he is kept moving the sooner he will tire. It is well to keep him in hand with as heavy a strain as can be risked; for he fights to the last, and there is no knowing what he may do. Even when he comes to the surface and shows his white side, the sight of the landing-net nerves him to what the pugilists call a "game finish." Three-quarters of an hour have gone, when Narcisse slips the net under him with a quick but sure scoop, and kills him with a blow from the paddle. "C'est sérieusement grosse," he says, as he holds up a twenty-five-inch fish. Really the balance does seem wrong when it marks only five pounds.

After a couple of hours' cruising about the eddy, with more or less luck, we go above the point, making our way with

some difficulty through the tangle of rocks and trees, though the men, canoe on head and both hands full, skip along easily enough. There we find a little family party of winanishe close under the bank in a hole beneath some alder-roots, which would exactly suit a trout's idea of a home. Farther up we get some pretty casting off a rocky bank, past which a strong up-eddy runs. Later on, when the water has fallen and new eddies form immediately above the point, there will be good fishing, either off the rocks or in the canoe, which the men will hold in the very dividing-line between the main current over the fall and that which sets inshore.

At luncheon, which is not a feast of obligation at the lodge, a winanishe *à la broche* gives us a chance to test the men's cookery. The fish, split down the back and opened out like a kite, is skewered with slips of red willow, well salted and peppered, inserted in a cleft stick fastened with spruce-root or a withe of alder, and then, stuck in the ground before a clear fire of driftwood, is broiled without any basting but its own fat. If you prefer the flavor, you may skewer a piece of bacon to the upper part of the fish. The delicate pink flesh is intermediate in flavor between

that of the salmon and that of the trout; richer than the latter, less cloying than the former. Planked shad is not better. After luncheon



Tadoussac — Low Tide.

the pipe and a chat, with a *boucane* to keep the flies off; the logs chafing and grinding against the shore suggest to the men some reminiscences of *la drive* and its perils. The artist gets a sketch, for which Willyám poses. For another mile above, the rapid foams white. That hill,

covered with dark spruces, which divides it, is the point of Ile Maligne; well named, for, surrounded by heavy rapids pulsating in *chutes* through rocky gorges, it is rarely accessible, sometimes not for several successive years.

In the evening we fly down in ten minutes what it took us over an hour to mount. The roar of the Vache Caille swells like the sound of an approaching train. The bowman stands up to look, says a word to his mate, then both settle low on their heels, and two bits of rapid are run like a flash, though the trees slipping past are the only sign of motion the passenger feels. With the current setting out straight over the fall, it is an ugly-looking place, but "à terre, en masse;" and a bit of quick paddling brings the shore close. The men interchange a rapid glance. "Au large?" "Pas trop." The canoe turns out again, to the horror of any passenger making the run for the first time; but, before he can remonstrate, tilts over the pitch where a pyramidal rock backs up the water, swings end for end, and sidles into an eddy just its own length which has scooped out a hollow in the bank within forty yards of the fall. "It is quite possible to drown one's self here," remarks Pitre as he takes his

Monsieur's rod and coat. It is a point of honor, however, with these men never to risk a passenger's comfort, much less his safety. Any recklessness or bungling would meet sharp criticism over the camp-fire. They are cool and courageous in real danger, however, and among themselves the rivalry is very keen. Nothing delights them more than to have a Monsieur who can appreciate their points, and, not minding a few bucketfuls of water, gives them a chance of display. After all, the passenger has the best of guaranties in the fact that very few of them can swim.*

Life in a forest fishing-lodge is much the same in one place as in another, and its delights have been often enough dwelt upon. To some its charm seems inexplicable; and such it must remain if they forget that it lies less in the joys that are present than in the cares, the worries, and the annoyances that are left behind. But if he has been able for a time to put aside his occupations, and to enter upon a well-earned leisure with a free mind, the gray-haired man gets from his simple surroundings a pleasure that is as unalloyed as that

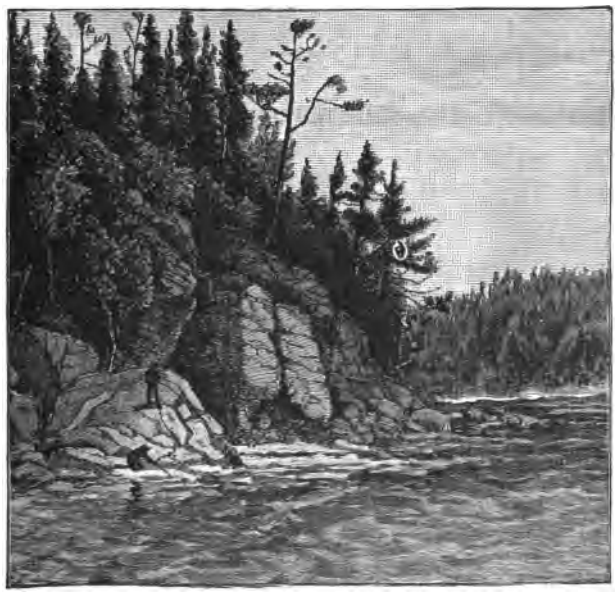
* We speak only of the professional canoemen of the Décharge. Some of the Pointe Bleue Indians are good enough in the canoe; but the railway has brought forward many men without experience, either of these heavy waters or of the niceties of winanishe-fishing.

of childhood. The boy's appetite and the boy's rest come back; and as he sits before the fire made of wood which the spring torrent has piled up almost at his door, the simple jest or the well-worn tale has a zest beyond all the wit of the city clubs.

Among a score of canoemen, there is pretty certainly one whose fiddle can help to brighten the evening. If "les Messieurs" are too weary to dance, the canoemen have a never-failing reserve of agility. But there is nothing frivolous in their dancing, and its mirth is a solemn joy. No man in front of battle ever wore a sterner look than does Xavier as he prepares to out-dance Pitre, while the feet of Aunis, the fiddler, keep time with an incessant heel and toe. After the dance, the song. Some one of the group standing or sitting about, or, quite as likely, in canoeman's fashion, resting on one knee, starts an old *chanson*, perhaps *Cecilia* or *En roulant ma boule*, and the rest take up the refrain.

But what are these impromptu merry-makings to the *fête* which is held on the national day of Canada or of the United States, and to which invitation is given after mass to all the parish, the poachers who have been detected being especially bidden, that they may know that no bitterness is

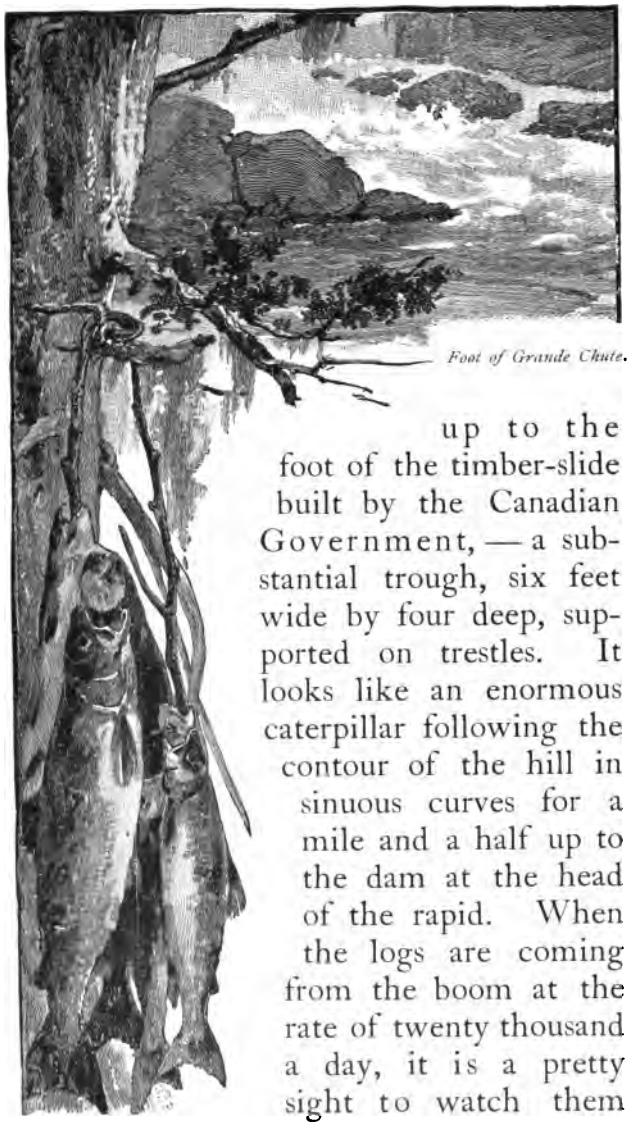
felt? And they come, young and old, not men alone, but *les créatures* as well; for there will be not only song and dance by special permission of Monsieur le Curé, but fireworks brought all the way from "the States" for this occasion. One shrewd invalid comes in advance of the rest with his little petition; for well he knows that it is an occasion when the sternest Protestant or the most matter-of-fact sceptic cannot refuse a "trente sous" toward the "petite collecte" to help him defray the ex-



Foot of Ile Maligne Portage.

penses of a pilgrimage — by steamer — to La Bonne Ste. Anne. As the tobacco is passed, pipes are produced with a unanimity that recalls the passage in Parkman describing the *coureurs des bois* who destroyed Schenectady, every one of whom had "his inseparable pipe hung at his neck in a leather case." And the dances! Everyone dances as if his character were at stake and time of no value. The unsuspecting Monsieur who joins in one of these complicated contra-dances finds at the end of three-quarters of an hour's effort that there are more exhausting pleasures than a hard portage. Story-telling and singing fill the evening until with the parting song, *Bon soir, mes amis, bon soir*, the guests troop off to the canoes, and are safely carried to the mainland across the turbulent Vache Caille Eddy.

The Club waters below Alma Island are similar in character of fishing to the Caron. A shady path through the woods leads to the pools on the Petite Décharge; but the easiest way is round by canoe, and then, disembarking at the foot of the Carcajou Rapid, to follow along the rocky shore beneath the high clay bluffs which here border the Petite Décharge on both sides. The way leads alongside the rapid



Foot of Grande Chute.

up to the foot of the timber-slide built by the Canadian Government, — a substantial trough, six feet wide by four deep, supported on trestles. It looks like an enormous caterpillar following the contour of the hill in sinuous curves for a mile and a half up to the dam at the head of the rapid. When the logs are coming from the boom at the rate of twenty thousand a day, it is a pretty sight to watch them

fly down the sharp pitch at the lower end of the slide, strike the water with a thud like a cannon-shot, and go jostling each other down stream. A mass of swirling logs circling round the eddies, racing down the rapids, and spoiling the fishing, is not, however, a pretty sight for the angler.

The Carcajou Pool, so called after some legendary wolverene, is half-way up the rapid, just below a considerable fall. Fishing from the large flat rocks is a pleasant change from the canoe; for one need not be an expert to stand upright, even when the waves come knee-deep over them. Sometimes a long cast is made for a fish rising far out, sometimes the fly is dropped perpendicularly from a high rock into a snug corner where the constantly recurring tail shows a winanishe "at home." The fish here are large, as a rule. If you miss them, or whip the pool too much when they are not taking well, they soon get to know the line. Winanishe thus educated will rise in numbers all round your fly, curiously inspect every new one you try, but refuse them all. Then is the time for leaders of the finest gut, and the delicate hand which can send a tiny cocked-winged "dun" floating down the stream as naturally as the genuine article.

Then, too, is the time when the surreptitious small boy, from St. Joseph d'Alma opposite, with a fine fat stone-fly, a plump grasshopper, or a juicy angleworm, takes that particular "grosse des grosses" for the chance of which you have traded away your turn at the Caron or at the Remou de Monsieur Farine, the local rendering of a Mr. Flower's name. Confirmed poachers can be spiritually disciplined by the Curé; but what is to be done to an urchin who says, "I comprehend not at all; I am deaf and dumb"?

The slide when dry is a convenient roadway to the bridge which crosses to the village. At the post-office the whole stock of letters is exhibited that, besides picking out your own, you, naturally knowing everybody in Canada or the United States, may advise as to the despatch of other people's. A visit to Monsieur le Curé is always a pleasant interlude. "We are only commencing in this parish," says the tall, good-looking young priest, by way of apology for the ladder which leads instead of steps to the platform that runs round the house, and for the absence of the prim flowerbeds enclosed by whitewashed cobblestones which ought to adorn the presbytery garden.

His *bottes sauvages*, in odd contrast with cassock and biretta, show that he has just come in from a long tramp to an outlying mission, the only road to which is by canoe and portage. He is a keen angler, and has improved the opportunity by catching some *brochets*—the pike (*Esox lucius*)—thus furnishing material as well as spiritual sustenance for the struggling settlement. The interior of the presbytery is severely plain; but the book-shelves show the scholarly tastes, lack of time to cultivate which is his only complaint. After a pleasant chat we take our leave, but not till the Curé has promised to try and get time for a day at the winanishe.

On the way down the road home there are many polite greetings, with lifting of hats and "salut, Messieurs." A peep into the schoolhouse turns the busy hum into a rustle of rosy-cheeked, clean-faced, tidy girls and boys forming into line to salute the Messieurs with courtesies and bows. As the nearest doctor is fifteen miles away, and comes only once a month, there is a great run on the medical skill and patience of a kind-hearted guest of the Club. He has to deal not only with the *vertiges* and *douleurs* of patients who come from far and near, but with Néré Tremblay's wife's

brother-in-law, two parishes off, whose symptoms are described at third hand, with great emotion, but rather succinctly, as "a frightful pain all over his body." He becomes unwittingly a worker of "faith cures." After his departure a quinine pill, guaranteed to be from his box, will cure anything from toothache to chronic rheumatism. "Ah! a doctor, sir, that! One of the first! He knows all that! He is better than Panclāre (Painkiller)! It is I, I who speak, who say that," says old Dieudonné Gaudreau, who, being ninety years old, knows everything. But whatever doubt may rest on the cures, none can exist as to the reality and severity of the sufferings of these poor invalids, whose comforts are few, and whose exposures and hardships are many.

Another pleasant variation is a visit to the Grande Chute, either by canoe up the Petite Décharge, or by road, with a tiny maiden in a big sunbonnet to bring back the *quatre roue* from the portage across the head of Alma Island. The most reliable fishing in the Grande Décharge is in the coves and eddies for the first mile and a half below and adjoining the rush of water from the Grand Chute, which comes tearing down from Lake St. John in foaming

breakers and seething whirlpools. These are all private waters, and are for the most part controlled by Mr. Griffith of Quebec, whose lodge, a mile higher up, commands a splendid view of the outlet and of magnificent sunsets. Below the Grande Chute the Grande Décharge, widening out to a breadth of nearly two miles, finds its way through beautifully wooded islands by a network of channels.

This part of the river is most uncertain as to fishing, as there are few permanent eddies suited to the winanishe, and it is filled with pike. It is, however, very picturesque; and the stillness, broken only by the murmur of one of the innumerable rapids which look small till the canoe is in them, is a restful change from the turmoil of the Grande Chute. Then, just below Mistook, the only little settlement on the shore opposite Alma Island, come the Cedar Rapids, a sudden plunge of the river over a trap dike extending between a chain of islands from shore to shore; then a swift rush of the water for a couple of miles down to the head of Ile Maligne. Any one in search of exciting canoeing will find it in this run, which ends in a sharp turn into a cove just above the falls. A two-mile portage, which is simply a

scramble over and along the face of huge rocks piled on each other and surmounted by *chevaux de frise* of bushes and fallen timber, has to be made before the rapid is reached which leads to the Caron. On account of the scenery it is worth all the hard work; the *gens de Mistook* fish out with bait any stray winanishe to be found among the rocks.

From the Vache Caille to Chicoutimi is about twenty-eight miles by the river, and in fair weather the descent is a delightful run, even if the Gervais Rapid be in such humor that the two-miles portage of rocks must be made. A bright sun shines upon us as we leave the point of Alma Island and cross the eddy to a place half a mile or more away, where it is safe to enter the lower end of the Vache Caille Rapid and shoot it. Here and there we halt for a parting cast over pools that have before yielded good fish, and then pass on to the head of the Gervais to reconnoitre; for no one can tell from hour to hour whether this fickle rapid may be run or not. Now, fortunately, it is in an amiable mood, and only twice does it force us to land for a short portage. With such water under the canoe, miles are quickly passed, and presently less turbulent currents

carry us where the alert canoemen may rest a while; and, as they gently paddle, the song naturally breaks out: —

> "Canot d'écorce qui vole, vole,
> Canot d'écorce qui volerait."

Here one canoe turns back; the other goes on until at La Dalle the Rivière des Aulnets falls in a pretty cascade down the precipitous bank of a little cove. On its farther side we land; for just below is Le Grand Remou, into whose white waters no one willingly enters. We climb the hill to the home of the canoemen, and while the women prepare us a welcome meal the *quatre roue* and the *charrette* are got ready; for over the six-mile portage the canoe and its burden can ride on a good road, beside which farmhouses are frequent. Below us lies the Great Eddy; but the Décharge soon curves away from us, while in the distance on the other bank we see the cascades of the Rivière Au Sable, one of the outlets of Lape Kenogami. When the sound of falling water comes up through the thick forest, we alight, and take a descending path through a pretty evergreen wood, and find ourselves again at the waterside where the River Shipshaw enters. "Shipshaw," as Joseph

explains, "c'est-à-dire, mauvaise rivière; c'est bien difficile d'ascendre."

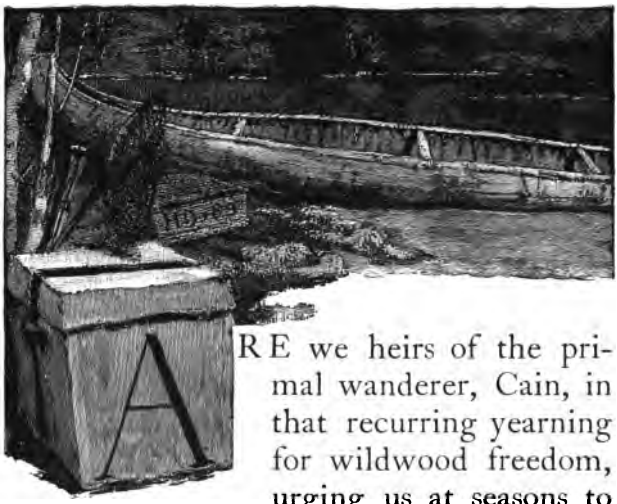
Chicoutimi is but six miles away now, and we are entering Les Terres Rompues. One rapid only lies before us, and that not a difficult one, although the faithful Joseph points out the place where "un homme, une créature et un enfant sont noyés." Keeping toward the northern bank we presently find the gate in the great boom which bars the river, and let ourselves through, and head across for Chicoutimi, which, with her cathedral, and all the pride of "a city that is set on a hill," looks patronizingly down upon her prosperous faubourg of lumber-mills. As we cross, we are leaving behind us, on the opposite bluff, Ste. Anne de Saguenay, her spire and her roofs bright in the low-down sun. A moment's delay to hail a passing canoe and to give a message to its occupant — young, black-eyed, and well-looking, but already counted the most skilful of Décharge canoemen — and our poem in birch-bark passes between lumber-schooners and steam-tugs, and our canoe journey is done.

The rest of the river — if that great cañon full of ebbing and flowing water can be called a river — is known to all who

"journey," like Dr. Syntax, "in search of the picturesque," and to many others who have seen it through Mr. Howells's eyes. While the boat stays at Tadoussac it will be worth while to pass by the life of to-day, whether in the fisherman's cabin or the fashionable villa, to rest for a little in the old church, successor of a still older one, and reflect on the heroism of those Jesuit fathers to whom, whatever we may think of their faith or their aims, we must accord the merit of a self-abnegation which has never been surpassed. And before we turn away from the little altar we may give a thought to Father La Brosse, who as he had himself foretold, closed a life of saintly devotion while kneeling before it. The legend runs that, tolled by angelic hands, the bells of every mission he had served marked the moment of his passing soul.

NEPIGON RIVER FISHING

By A. R. Macdonough



ARE we heirs of the primal wanderer, Cain, in that recurring yearning for wildwood freedom, urging us at seasons to break away from clipped and formal routine? Do ancient instincts of the chase, wrought in the blood by some shadowy forester among our ten thousand ancestors, chafe on the curb of civilization? Even the Roman poet — man of the world if there ever was one — wanting only a touch of fisherman's nature to be completely human and modern, rejoices in spring for the kiss of southerly winds, and the launching of the boats.

The world has measurably filled up since Cain's time; but there are still left some spaces of open air in which one may escape a crowd.

Canada is now the goal for American sportsmen, as for cashiers. The Adiron-

dacks are populous with inns. Tanners and lumbermen have swept the sheltering forests from the shrinking waters of Pennsylvania. The fountains leaping from the Catskills are prisoned in tame preserves long before they braid together the stately Delaware. A thousand miles eastward, where St. Lawrence meets the sea, lie the placid pools around Chaleur Bay, and the wild glens alive with salmon, furrowing the northern shore. A thousand miles westward, where its sources spring, a tangle of lakelets and their outlets teems with trout.

Between the Huronian rock spine of Canada and those five unsalted seas looped in a girdle binding rather than parting the Dominion and the Republic, as well as north of the lower St. Lawrence, there spreads a maze of countless lakes, each fed from the mountains by many streams, and each pouring by one river into the greater waters. Of those distinguished by a name, the chief ones, tracing them westward, are the St. John, the Sturgeon, Simcoe, Muskoka, Nipissing, and Nepigon. They form a series of filtering basins, catching the highland drainage, often through channels hundreds of miles long, holding its sediment, and delivering a clear flood to

swell the limpid volume in which they lose themselves.

Each of these young rivers is washed after it is born, before it hurries to be married to the greater one. Luckily all are rebaptized, too, with names more Christian than those of their sources. Saguenay, before leaving Lake St. John, might call itself Ouiatchouan; St. Maurice runs away from its birth-name of Nabescoutianel; Nipissing, beginning as Tamangamingue, ends in the French River; and Nepigon issues smooth and pronounceable out of a cradle woven by fifteen distinct rivers, from which an easy selection presents the pleasing puzzles of Kawabatongwa, Pagitchigano, Katchangatinawi, and Pickitigouching.

Urged by that "zeal of propagandism and the fur-trade," which the historian calls the vital forces of New France, the region about Lake Superior was early penetrated by both the converting and the bartering nomads, the pursuit of souls being sometimes combined with that of peltries. At the Sault, through which the lake discharges, the faith was preached in 1641 to two thousand assembled Chippewas; and this mission, as well as another at the western end of the lake, is spoken of by

Marquette as being in existence in 1670, though it was afterward abandoned. The religious establishments on this river, however, are much more recent. The mission on Lake Helen was founded by the Jesuit Fathers about 1870, and that on Lake Nepigon some fifteen years ago by the Church of England.

The Hudson's Bay Company, and its predecessor, the Northwest Company, have been established in the Nepigon region more than a hundred and twenty years. Both the spiritual and the trafficking influence persist among the present scattered Chippewas. Order and authority are represented for them by the Hudson's Bay Company, while they retain the traditions planted with their missions by the Jesuits. There is not, however, that utter subjection to the priests that enslaves the poorer and duller *habitants* of Lower Canada, threatening an insoluble problem for us, if the question of its incorporation with the Union ever becomes a living one.

It is unlikely that Nepigon Lake will always miss the settlement invited by its breadths of fertile shore, its mountains of ore, and its exhaustless fisheries. Already, prospecting approaches it; and nothing forbids building to it from the Canadian

Camp on the Nepigon.

Pacific a branch less than one-fourth the length of the route from Quebec to Lake St. John, and presenting, on a grade of ten feet to the mile, no graver difficulties than those the main line has grandly overcome.

Lake Nepigon is two-thirds as large as Lake Ontario, very deep in parts, thickly sprinkled with picturesque islands, and strangely irregular in outline. Indented by deep bays, it stretches southward a fringe of long tentacles, as if feeling for a descent.

This it touches in a depressed ridge of trap-rock crossing its course, and over this it issues with a fall of thirty feet.

The cataract of Virgin Falls is striking for the grace and flow of its curves, both vertical and cross-sweeping; for the snowy dazzle flashing out of solid blue, just as it leaves the lip, into a storm of tossing pearls; for the mass of water rushing in across from the western verge, beating half the main flood aside; and for the lessening surges cresting the blended torrents as they seethe away for half a mile through a broad basin rimmed with green, and proportioned in nature's nicest measure to the height of the fall. In this font of fretted ivory and jewelled spray, the river Nepigon receives its baptism.

From its leap out of the lake the river runs nearly due south thirty-two miles, with a fall of three hundred and thirteen feet, to Lake Superior. It pours a full, strong current — in many places sixty feet deep and two hundred wide — clean up to its shores, without swamp or snag or drift. Roughly estimated, one-third of its course is varied by lakes, and another third broken by rapids. Widening into five great basins and many smaller expanses, it forms a chain of tarns, with long, linking reaches

of inlet and outflow. These five daughters of the wilderness are prettily named Blanche, Emma, Maria, Jessie, and Helen. Tradition fails to tell precisely what ladies of the lakes lent to these lakes of the ladies their dainty distinction.

Some of the chutes of the Nepigon, as those that perpetually weave and tear to pieces Cameron's and Hamilton's Pools, and the thundering outrush of Lake Emma, are unapproachable by keels risking either upward or downward progress. Others, like the great rapid at Camp Minor, pulsing convulsed with the last water-spasm of Virgin Falls, a mile above it, may safely sweep the birch as it leaps skirting down one edge, taking dashes of foam inboard; but they roll with a weight and power that bar return. Right through the mighty sluice, in the middle of some of them, the canoe may drive at a mile a minute without dimpling the liquid mirror, but must creep back by hand-grips of poles close to shore. At other reaches, the river, just doubting whether it shall burst into a rapid, courses bold and strong in curling ripples, all on the point of dashing into foam, four or five feet deep across its whole breadth, over an even bottom of stones, more than pebbles and less than

bowlders, whirling the canoe smoothly a mile or more on level keel.

The note of the Nepigon is speed and might and brightness. It is the young St. Lawrence rehearsing its majestic flow, and supreme Niagara. Here "Arethusa arose from her couch of snows," preparing to meet, hundreds of leagues away, as she nears the sea, dark "Alpheus bold, from his glacier cold," rushing to her embrace through the chasm of grim Saguenay.

To these tempting waters, anglers of every grade and from all regions throng. At the Mission, nestled in a nook of green, carved out among the rocks on the lower edge of Lake Helen, parties of Indians, catching a wind right aft, pile squaws, pappooses, and numberless dogs into rickety birches, to skim along under a dirty blanket sail, pursuing for food the snaky pickerel and coarse Mackinaw trout of the lake. The young novice, too eager to delay, drops his first fly and lifts his first two-pound fish even under the shadow of the railway bridge. The expert, trained for many years in many waters, and epicure of the best, his canoe trimly packed with a month's supplies in rubber bags and light boxes, manned by a steersman and a sturdy oarsman, presses steadily on his three days'

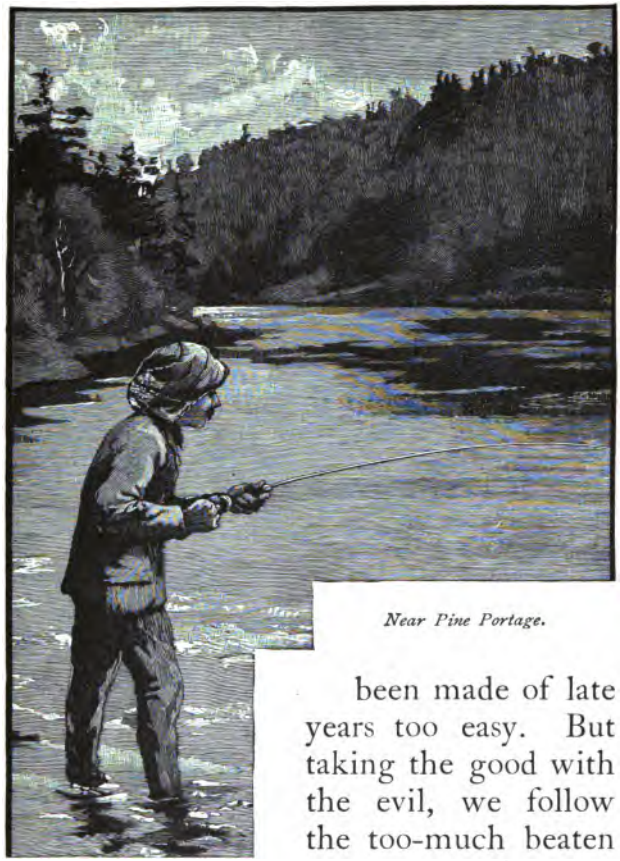
course for the upper river. He will overtake a flotilla, bearing some millionnaire and his household goods, feigning to rough it with actually a complete cooking-stove and a huge negro cook aboard. Or at the head of a portage he will come upon some noisy breakfasting party of ten or twelve from one of the inland cities, enlivening these calm solitudes with the clamor of the sociable West. Camps dot the shore ahead of him, and camps astern — some charming with the gay colors and bright presence of women, some loud and dirty with pot-hunters on a picnic.

Why should any one fancy, as so many will, that he may enter easily at middle age into the angler's full enjoyment without growing to his skill by practice, any more than he could change untrained into the ripe critic or painter? Fishing is an art; a mechanical one at its lower extreme, with nets and worms, but rising to the finish of a fine one. Relish of nature comes as a fruit of cultivated perceptions. Art and nature blend to produce the angler's exquisite pleasure. Yet one will step from a broker's office or a counter into a tackle-shop, equip himself with the latest costly devices, and hurry to the water, to learn with surprise and disappointment that he

has not bought faculty with his fittings. The years lie behind him wasted for this purpose, unless as a boy he paddled in the burns of Agawam or Sullivan or Pike, fleshing his maiden hook in finer prey than dace or suckers, with his senses freshly open to inflowing waves of touch from sound and color and form.

A sketch of such a personage is caught, uncaricatured, from nature. His burly body planted in a real chair, two guides steer him down, then laboriously row him up, to and fro, in the stiff current that shoots through the long reach below Pine Portage, abounding in fish. Either pudgy hand thrusts out a short pole, loaded with a great glittering spoon. Of the few demented trout that strike, he clumsily hauls in three or four, and over the lost ones discharges a volley of abuse at the poor guides. Of course he wonders how any one can like fishing; and of course, as his yacht steams away to some lake town, of which he is doubtless a harmless citizen of credit and renown, he swears that never again will he visit that Nepigon; and all the guides in chorus swear that never again, with their aid or service, shall he.

The presence of such pseudo-sportsmen proves that access to these solitudes has



Near Pine Portage.

been made of late years too easy. But taking the good with the evil, we follow the too-much beaten track for a thousand miles, either directly westward from Montreal, or by noble steamers worthy to traverse Lake Superior, as far as Port Arthur, and then eastward a hundred miles by rail.

A little after noon, trains both eastward and westward on the Canadian Pacific ap-

proach the picturesque mass of Red Rock, the headland of a sandstone range skirting Lake Superior, marking the mouth of Nepigon River. An old post of the Hudson's Bay Company is here. That company's discretion must be praised, if any among the picked men it employs surpass its present agent at Red Rock in shrewdness, tact, and courtesy. His attention, directed by correspondence that can hardly be opened too early in the season, will have prepared everything as to guides and their provisions; and the canoe will wait, already loaded, for the *voyageur* to step into it.

Guides are usually to be had in plenty, and of great variety. It is safer to engage good ones beforehand, rather than run the risk in July or early August of finding that they are all up the river, and waiting a couple of days for a returning party. At that season there are often thirty anglers at once, scattered in camps along the stream, each pair of whom, if properly equipped, have at least two men to pilot them. The calling has its leaders and its learners. They differ greatly in skill, endurance, and appetite, and, above all, in temper, as might be expected from their mingled strain of Scotch, French, and In-

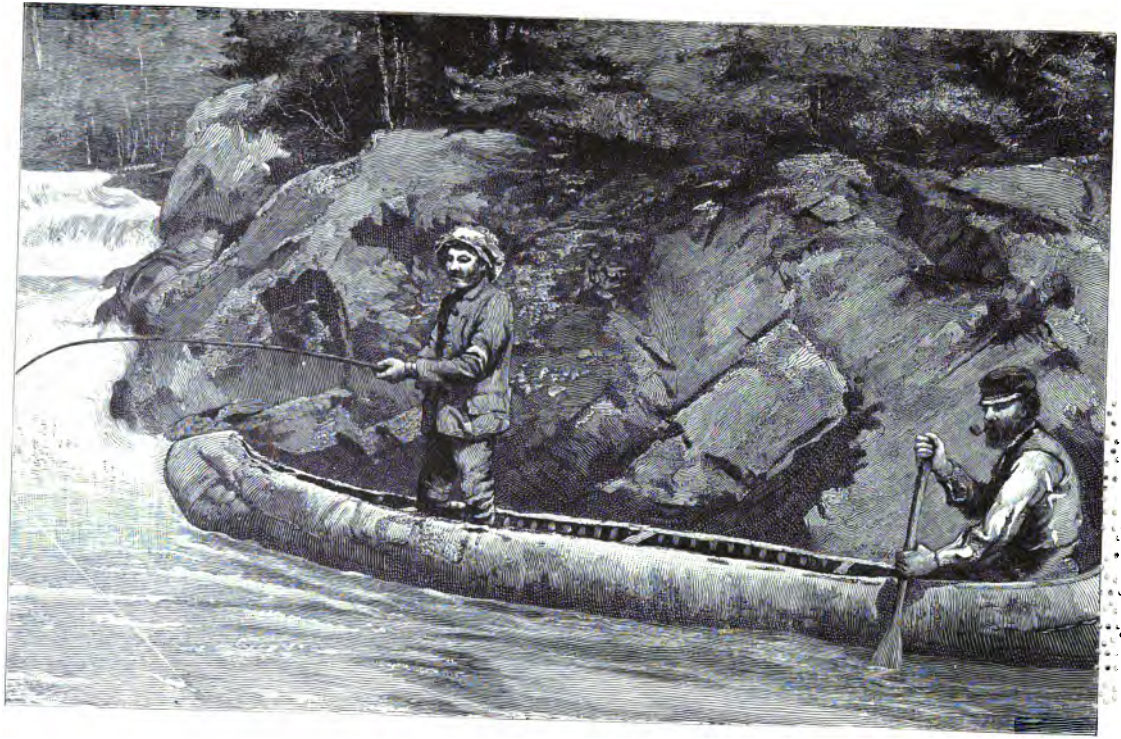
dian blood. The worst of them are pure Indians, slothful, dirty, sullen, and insubordinate. It fares ill with the novice who falls into the hands of such a pair. He will be pulled lazily along in a wet boat, portaged with exasperating slowness and long and frequent halts for gossip with friends, or greedy forays on provisions, dumped into old camps reeking with the summer's refuse, his tent pitched awry, the cooking nauseous, unless he turns *chef* himself, and his stores spoiled and wasted. Then these fellows have a true talent for sickness. They may give out at any moment, insist on being sent home to die, or lie groaning and guzzling until it suits their humor to go to work a while.

At the other extreme, the best of the guides are like the picked men of any business anywhere. Alert, cheerful, expert afloat and neat ashore, they make their employer's comfort a duty, and his success their pleasure. They are companionable, too, with their native shrewdness, their original notions, and quick sense for the queer ways of the many people they have had to do with. Each of five or six of such men who might be named, and are well known wherever the river is known, is as complete a valet of the woods as could be desired.

Certain natural landmarks divide the thirty-two miles of the river's flow into three stretches. Alexander Bay, about ten miles up, limits the first, and in and about it the fishing is so fine that many visitors do not care to ascend farther. The upper end of Pine Portage marks about the close of a second stage in the course, the ten or twelve miles below it containing some of the choicest pools and reaches, and detaining most of the anglers who visit the river. Between this point and the Falls, large fish have their haunts, and the rocky walls and blue waters reach their height of blended beauty and wildness. The loss of five days spent in ascending and running down the full length of the river is well repaid by the comparative solitude gained.

The afternoon's voyage only clears the fringe of Indian settlement, skirting the river for some miles. Passing beneath the fine railroad bridge, built on the American side, and shipped in sections to be put up here, the course turns into Lake Helen, bending to its eastward shore, where, under the shadow of the Mission church, lies a village of huts. If tenting here for the night is once tried, it will not be repeated until visiting friends and

Nepigon River Fishing



West Falls

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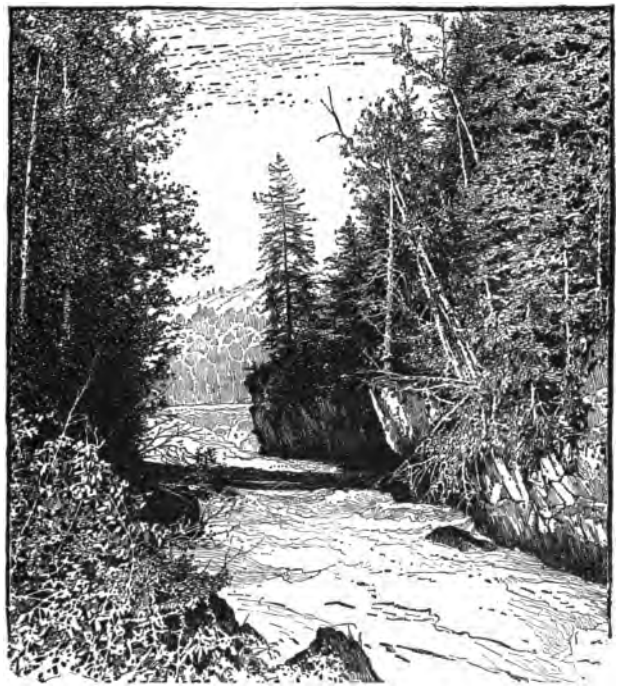
howling dogs are forgotten. The final cause of these sneaking and yelping packs, all shabbily alike, can only be guessed when the deep snows of this region make their life a burden in the work of sledging. It is wiser to stop long enough to cut a stiff birch mast, and then to cross the lake under the evening breeze to the mouth of the river, entering through fields of rushes. It is here over one hundred yards across, running deep and strong, but smooth. Natives are fishing or smoking in wigwams along the flat banks. At some places Lake Superior fishing-boats are tied up. They are both stanch and trim, a cross between a whale-boat and pilot craft, two-masted and half-decked, with a centre-board, three to eight tons in burden, and used for deep-water fishing in the great lake. At the better shanties, now and then built on some cleared half-acre yielding a handful of potatoes or hay, the canoe turns in with an inquiry for eggs, the Indian name of them sounding precisely like the ancient ὠόν of the Greeks. The almost certain answer is that the dogs have eaten the fowls. Dispensing then with the "omne vivum ab ovo," we make supper without them, pitching the tent among the hay, both

bed and board being managed in a very improvised fashion while *en route*. Next day, after a couple of hours' ascent against a strengthening current, a long line of white-caps racing across the broadened river defines the upper edge of Alexander Bay, where we first take the shore for a portage.

There are but two portages of any length along the course of the river, one the Long Portage, a path leaving the stream below its majestic curve, as it rounds with a tumbling torrent into this bay, and bending away westward, receding from the almost inaccessible depths that feed and frame Cameron's Pool, till it drops to the outlet of Lake Jessie. Its easy walk of about three miles is divided by a brook, the only tributary to the river, shortening the return portage by so much of waterway.

Above this, and again about the distance of one-third the length of the river, Pine Portage sweeps back westward over a rather more rough and wooded track of a mile, quitting the bank by a steep, grassy slope at the great rapids roaring out of Hamilton's Pool outlet, and regaining it not far below the outlet of Lake Emma. Between these occur short carries, one



Centre Falls.

avoiding the swift broken water racing around the base of Split Rock, and one across an islet circled by two cascades. Every carry, however short, requires the complete unloading of the birch to her very ribs, and careful restowing when she takes the water again. The canoe, too great a burden for one man to poise inverted on his head, as they portage the lighter ones, is steadied on the shoulders

of both guides, who trot away under it among the rough stones with a sure and quick step. All this work they do with surprising care and patience and expedition.

These portages are the social exchanges of the river. If no one there meets the voyager, scraps of newspaper or marks on wrappers disclose what natives of what town lately crossed the trail. More often occupied by flying camps at either end, and always convenient baiting-points after the toil of reaching them, the guides here meet their friends, and the angler makes acquaintances. New-comers produce the mails and latest papers for those who care for them; descending parties bring notes of the sport promised or failing. Fly-books are compared, scores sometimes confided, cocktails, cigars, and addresses exchanged, and after an hour's joint lunch each goes on his way, wishing the other good-speed. The guides, all mutually well known, bear each other's burdens, helping good-naturedly in portaging, sharing generously their provisions, and their masters', and lingering a great deal more sociably than is sometimes convenient for the latter. Often a flotilla debarks, bound to or from the Hudson's Bay Company's Nepigon House on the Lake. Their trim canoes,

neat men, heaped provision-sacks, with groups of squaws and beady-eyed children, give the place an air of settlement and discipline. The next hour all has vanished with the beat of oars dying away beyond the bend below.

As these trails have been trodden for at least a hundred years, their condition is singular in two ways,— that it is no worse and no better. Long stretches of portage are level; and on these it would be easy to lay and keep in order rough tramways of timber, over which trolleys with burdens might be rolled with less labor than carries now exact. In winter the snow gives a smooth track; and it may be that summer is too short to make it worth while, or that the natives are waiting for a branch-line up the valley.

The time used in crossing Long Portage, with its double transshipment, will not reasonably be less than six or seven hours under fair-weather conditions. But into each life some rain must fall, rather more on the Nepigon than at home. When, under a thunderstorm breaking over the trail, the bushes drip, and the stones slip, and all the guides' care can hardly save the sacks dry, it may be a day's work to reach the grassy slope at its upper end.

Then, after a drenching like a water-cure, comes at night a wet camp and a sitzbath. Then one knows how much more beautiful sunshine is in the wilderness than in the town. If it is fair, after a leisurely dinner the boat can be easily pushed on a mile or two farther, and hauled up at nightfall on one of the islets just inside Lake Jessie for a clean camping-spot needing no clearing.

The third day begins with a stiff bit of poling through Bashewana Rapids, the belt joining Lake Jessie with her upper sister, Lake Maria. This water is well filled with fish, though seldom over three pounds, and having the peculiarity of very yellow flesh. Rounded knobs of reddish granite here meet the river, covered with dense berry-bushes and *débris* of burnt forest. Square blocks of basalt, the steep talus splintered by frost from lofty walls, again edge the river above, where it rolls wedged between the cliffs of Split Rock. It comes down to this pass by a double leap, a mile above, through two channels of dashing cascades, prisoning between them a narrow ledge, giving safe foothold for climbing from the eddy below to the eddy above.

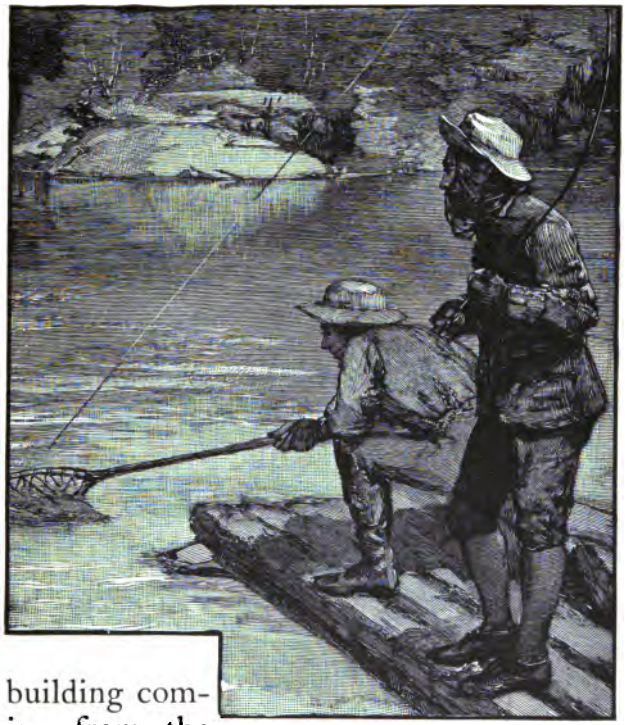
The hard work of three carries, includ-

ing the laborious Pine Portage, brings the day well on; and after an upward mile or so of smooth but strong water, the guides gladly land for the night at the broad, flat rocks on the lower edge of the Great White Chute. Here the most picturesque rapid on the river forms, by the drop at a right angle of Lake Emma over a low but rugged trap ridge. The water bounds in great billows straight across the river, striking square at a cliff on the east shore, and shooting a powerful recoiling current both upward and downward. Two or three great fish, but not more, may be taken at night and morning, leaping out of the boiling white among the blocks in the corners, where the surges bear away from the shore.

There is no need of battling for the last half-day against the mighty sweep of the shallowing river over broad Victoria Rapids, when a chain of side waters with a little easy land transit leads up to Camp Minor, within sight of the Great Falls. This point commands a number of smaller pools and quick runs; and as it is within easy reach too of the Falls, no better place can be chosen for a permanent camp. Here the quality of guides is put to the test. The lazy one pitches wherever he

finds a space cleared, however dirty. Our faithful workers, after careful inspection, pick out some point, dry, shelving, but not steep, well shaded, and as free from rocks as this stony region affords — with an easy landing-place, and a bit of gravel or stone basin for the bath. A few trees are felled, none being more than a foot through, stumps left or stakes driven for due order of tent-ropes and bedposts, and the canvas house set firm and square as a home for a fortnight. The next duty is to give the canoes a thorough overhauling, after the strain of their amphibious journey.

The canoes used on the Nepigon are a larger variety of the fairy craft paddled by the Micmacs and Montaignais of the lower river. They are nearly double the size of the latter, the largest being over thirty-five feet long and five feet wide, deeper and more heavily ribbed, showing the contrast between a pleasure carriage and a burden wagon. Like an evolution from the lonely *voyageur's* skiff into a vessel for trade and war, each carried, two centuries ago, a score of scalping Hurons, and can to-day float three tons of fur-packs or provisions. Naval estimates at the Post fix their cost at from seventy-five to a hundred and twenty dollars, the bark used in



Big Canoe Landing.

building coming from the Ottawa or Saguenay country, as the birches in this region are all small. The river is too deep for much use of setting-poles, and its long lake spaces are oftener crossed with the monotonous sweep of oars than by the deft and graceful impulse of the paddle. With a birch-pole jury-mast and improvised rigging they can carry canvas enough under a following or quartering breeze to

make slow way against the current. Their weight — from three to four hundred pounds — makes them harder to handle in swift water than the shells of the lower river; and the guides are therefore shy of nearing the heads of the heavier rapids, where the finest fish often lie. There, while they hold in an eddy, the angler can step into the rushing shallows along the shore, wading as far as he may venture, not over ankle-deep, for a long cast into the whirling foam. As to bringing in a great fish against that tearing torrent, he must reckon oftener on losing than landing him.

Besides being a shipwright, a good guide with his axe and a pound of nails makes a fair cabinet-maker for the woods. Abundant birch supplies the material out of which he builds along one side of the tent a bedstead, lifting its stretched sacking out of damp on stout crotches, and along the other a double shelf, shaped of light poles resting on forked stumps, useful to air the clothes and stores; while outside, where boughs overhang the bank, stand the table and chair of logs. Spruce sprays enough are plucked to carpet every nook of the tent, elastic under a rubber sheet.

The furnishing finished, an hour or two

remain for catching and cooking dinner. Some boat's-lengths above camp the eddy under a rock between two little rapids

Great Falls.

shooting away from the main stream, has always given up after a few casts a three-and-a-half-pound fish. Four or five more, none under two pounds, suffice for the table to-night and a supply for breakfast, plumped into the water-pen built of great stones. An ember from the light kitchen fire — in August a blaze is seldom needed here for warmth — kindles the after-din-

ner pipe for comfort, and then a cigar for luxury. As the stars come out, the hours bring cooler air, hinting at a change to thick nightdress and blankets. One of the charms of this woods-life is its simple carelessness as to costume. We delight in remembering the sub-curse, omitted in Eden, but muttered surely by every man since, upon Eve, for inventing or occasioning clothes. A trifle of *boucane* under the tent may be advisable against the first night's flies — and then the sleep of the just for the tired, lulled by flowing waters.

There are two kinds of flies on the Nepigon, — those that the angler uses and those that use him. The latter enjoy vaseline, suspect pennyroyal, and hate tar, but only retire baffled from veils and gloves. At morning they spread in a gray mist that gives the look to distant bays of reedy marshes. At evening their clusters hang in smoke-like clouds above the tips of pointed trees. They are always feeding, assisted by swarms of common houseflies.

Of the other kind of flies, the whitefish, very delicately, standing on his tail, asks for a small dark one. Trout are omnivorous, with less preference for red. A fly usually more welcome than others to the Nepigon trout, composed on the river after

several years' experiments, till now unnamed, and that might be called the Nepigon, is built after this fashion: On a thick body of light blue, well tinselled, or peacock's herl, it wears wings of English blue-jay, mixed with orange from cock-of-the-rock, and a hackle dyed by picric acid to clear permanent yellow. The blending produces green — yet a pure green fly is less successful. This fly has taken braces of six and three and a half pounds, and four and a half and three — the latter being cleverly scooped by the guide both at one sweep with two landing-nets that chanced to be aboard. The maker of his own flies needs to bring but few, with the material which he finds ample leisure to work up.

As to the relative merits of fly-fishing and bait-fishing, it may be fairly concluded — spurning always the spoon, for it is as barbarous to kill a trout so, as to eat him with one — that some people prefer poetry and some prose. To read anything, or to fish at all, is better than doing without either.

The fish of the Nepigon are not less various than abundant. To one using a minnow, the pike becomes a nuisance. Now and then in deep, still waters a sturgeon pokes up a foot or two of straight

black snout, looking like a fence-post, and sinks slowly back. Whitefish give a pleasant change to the menu. They frequent quiet bays or bends, where bubbles mark the haunt of their sporting-schools, and require careful handling. The Mackinaw, or lake trout, are coarse and heavy. Tempted only by glaring flies out of their lurking-places in swiftest water, they waste time and strain tackle till the angler is more vexed than pleased with his victim. For many sportsmen there is the like objection to fishing in Hamilton's Pool or Victoria Rapids, two points usually greatly favored. In the first, there rages a tumult of torrents, interrupted by occasional eruptions into the air of pebbles, fish, and foam. In the other, a vehement lashing swell lends to a two-pound trout the pretence of thrice his weight. And in neither haunt are large fish oftener taken than in the quieter upstream pools.

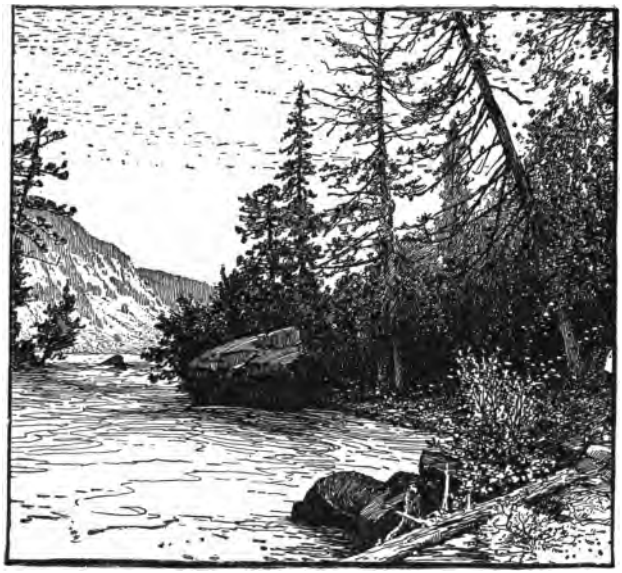
Of such pools fairly a dozen are within ten minutes' pull from the home camp. At the head of rapids, large or small; on either smooth side, just before the break; in eddies refluent along their torrent; at the tail where the displaced water rushes back upward past both banks; upon the reef usually formed beyond the foot, and

along the shores below, where the river regains quiet among rocks in six or eight feet depth ; in some or all of such places, and at some or all times, fish are to be found. Passing from one to another of these, two or three hours' leisurely fishing a day, will yield, after rejecting all under two pounds, an ample supply for the three tenants of the camp.

What to do with the hours not given to fishing? Sometimes the weather solves, or dissolves, that question, in an all-day downpour. All night the lightning may glare doubly intense through the white canvas, while the wakeful inmate speculates, under the roaring gale, which way the ridgepole may fall. Nepigon answers to Superior, and Superior re-echoes in rolling thunder and black drifts of fog. Such enforced leisure may be given to making flies, or to reading the novels, of which the expert has been careful to bring a stock of the best, ranging from Shorthouse to Guy de Maupassant. No newspapers — for one constant pleasure of the wilderness is the sense that the mind is purged from the miasma of the morning journal.

In brighter days there may be, for those whose taste inclines that way, the resources of photography or sketching. Yet, while

these white and whirling expanses baffle the camera, the general tone of color disappoints the painter. The rocks gleam with the cold dead gray of basalt, only sparsely mottled by lichens, with rare breaks where reddish-white granite shows a pale change. They are little relieved by the trees, partly sombre spruce, but principally dense curtains of spindling birch, chalky white in bark, and with whitish-green thin foliage, accented here and there by a pallid group of poplars. Willows are rare, even if they wore any solid coloring in their feathery fulness. Now and then a swift breeze, lifting the under-surface of these leafy hillside masses, strikes a sudden note of ashen gray, like a discord, into the landscape. If he turns to the water, it offers still less to invite the brush. It flashes a tint of steely blue, shot with foamy streaks and sparkles; and even where in quiet deeps it wins a hue of turquoise green, there always lacks the rich brown and raisin-red color-gamut of eastern rivers flowing out of spruce forests. Momentary effects may be caught among these blues and grays — but they are bodiless and elusive — a fluid flame like the molten beryl that slips over the lip of Horseshoe Fall, or the wavering gleam of swinging dulse under the waters along



Split Rock Carry.

Florida coral-reefs — or the phosphorescent flicker before a storm that beacons the rocky headlands of seaward St. Lawrence under the beating surf.

Unless for the sake of amusing an idle hour in practising at a mark, it is not worth the sportsman's while to burden his boat with a rifle. There is little game or bird-life on the river. From some high limb near camp may be heard the staccato minor song of the white-throated swallow, called by the Indians a lark — *alouette* being their general name for all singing things.

Ducks seek the wild-rice swamps, spreading out for leagues at a considerable distance east and west from the lake. The guides delight in the chase after a few brace of partridges, knocked down with sticks, or twitched by a pole and noose out of their stupid roost in the trees. A covey once actually sauntered into the tent, and was caught by quietly dropping the flap. Those troublesome vermin, the minks, are too shy for a shot; and the guides always neglect trapping them until after some morning has found the corral-pool empty of the best reserved fish.

Man may not live by fish alone; but not until the potato, rice, and flour sacks nearly reach bottom are the canoes overhauled with the last touches, and pointed southward. Few care to keep up with the river's speed, drifting in two days through its rocky cañons and placid lakes. There are favorite casts to be repeated, pools neglected on the way up that invite trial; and more than once the tent is pitched and folded, prolonging the regretful farewell.

Americans on either side the border concern themselves little about coming generations. Yet interest, if not duty, should prompt them to take some care

that this superb river shall not lose its pre-eminence as the finest trouting water of the world. It is no longer possible, as it was reported to be twenty-five years ago, to take in one day a barrel of trout averaging four pounds, nor can the angler now quickly fill his basket within sight of Red Rock Landing. But that the fish are there, neither few nor small, is certain, from this record of one rod for two hours each day, wielded not to make a score, but merely to supply the wants of three men.

	AVERAGE WEIGHT EACH DAY.	AVERAGE WEIGHT OF WHOLE CATCH.		NUMBER TAKEN OF OVER THREE LBS.
	lbs.	*lbs.*	*oz.*	
1886 . . .	16	2	2	22
1887 . . .	11	2	0	14
1888 . . .	10	2	4	14

The earlier accounts describe the condition of the river when it was fished only by the Indians — who do not harm the fishing — and rarely visited by casual sportsmen. The later record denotes its productiveness since it has become famous and accessible by new railroads. One hundred and fifty-five visitors camped on the river last year, with the usual proportion of careful and accomplished anglers to ignorant or greedy fishermen. The activity of so many enemies, even if they are not all Izaak Waltons, must effectively scatter

the trout into remoter haunts, and teach them to be shy wherever found. That they should disappear from the broad basins and inaccessible chasms of this grand river is not conceivable; nor that they will fail to be recruited from the far-reaching tributaries of the magnificent lake which feeds it. But they must decrease in number and size unless some reasonable restriction is imposed on their pursuers.

It was once proposed to lease the river; and such a club of one hundred members, contributing fifty dollars yearly, as might readily be made up among the complete anglers from Canada and the States, who frequent these waters, would protect the fish, yield a revenue to the Government, defray the cost of guardians, and profit the country by more than it now gains from outlay for guides and supplies. Or, if "common of piscary" must prevail, the authorities should at least extend the range of the sixth commandment to the finny tribe, and severely punish the use of all cruel and unfair devices in their capture. Unless it is cherished, the glory of the Nepigon may fade, and the story of its marvellous attractions may become a tradition of the past.

STRIPED BASS FISHING

By A. Foster Higgins

Pasque Island Club House

The Cast.

IF we turn to our national repertory of knowledge on the subject, the very admirable and exhaustive "Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States," we shall find described under the title of "Roccus Lineatus," or the Striped Bass, a fish so perfectly familiar to all who live along the eastern seaboard that, for them, it is hardly necessary to dwell upon his special characteristics. For those who have not enjoyed the precious privilege of being born near the sea, it must be pointed out that he is not the same fish that will be found in European waters, nor in the Mississippi, the White River, Arkansas, and in many rivers of the Southern States. The best

authorities hold that the Brassy Bass, the "Roccus Interruptus," has probably been there mistaken for the Striped Bass. The bass of Europe, the "Roccus Leibrax," a favorite food fish, is to be found from Tromsöe, Norway, to the Mediterranean, and is very closely related to our "Rockfish" or "Roccus Saxatilis" ("dwelling among rocks"); in which class our own beauty is included.

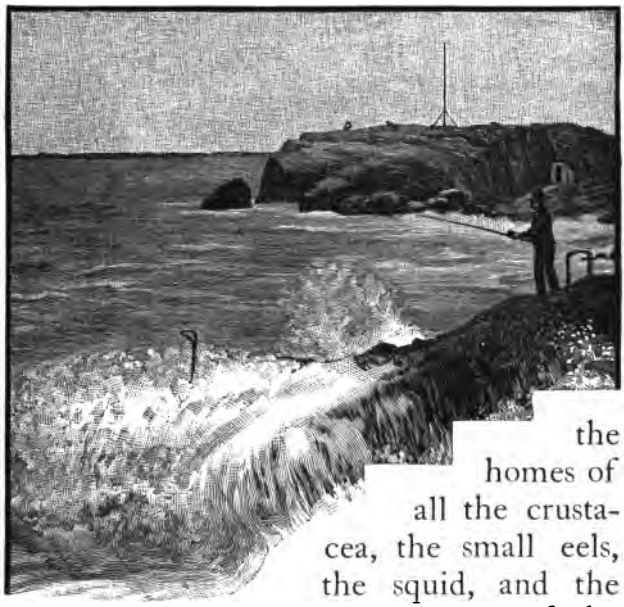
The two species are very similar in form, although the colors differ, — the American being conspicuously striped, while that of Europe is silvery gray. Both are strong, active, voracious fishes, and both ascend rivers; although the American bass seem to be much more addicted to life in fresh waters than their transatlantic relatives, probably owing to the fact that our rivers are more numerous, larger, and more plentifully stocked with the fish upon which the bass rely for food. They ascend the Potomac to the Little Falls, the Hudson to Albany, the Connecticut to Hartford, and the Saint Lawrence to Quebec. In the North he is known as the "Striped Bass;" in the South as "Rockfish," or the "Rock." Large sea-going individuals are sometimes known in New England by the names

of "Green-head," and "Squid-hound." There is considerable uncertainty regarding their southern limits, as they unquestionably wander much beyond their usual feeding-grounds, and have been caught in schools in Pensacola Bay, while solitary specimens have been captured at various points in the Gulf.

The Striped Bass are not migratory, being found along our coast in winter as well as summer, and in our markets at all times of the year; and one of the most potent causes of their diminution is the facility with which they are taken under the ice, by nets, spearing, etc. They are voracious feeders, entering the rivers to prey upon the "fry" of the shad, herring, and bluefish — and are particularly fond of crabs, shrimp, squids, clams, and mussels, and even lobsters, when shedding, or of a sufficiently small size to be conveniently "bolted" whole. They spawn in May and June; and as the number of eggs cast has been estimated at 2,248,000 each, it will be seen how rapid and great a growth is possible. Their increase in a month is 1½ inch — 5 months, 4½ inches — 8 months, 6 to 9 inches. After that from 2 to 6 lbs. per annum. Their average weight does not exceed 20 lbs.

In the Potomac, Hudson, and Connecticut Rivers the largest seldom exceeds 30 to 40 lbs. The Fish Commission has for several years had a standing offer of a reward for a 60 lb. fish from the Potomac; but none has as yet been forthcoming. The largest Striped Bass on record was one weighing 112 lb., taken at Orleans, Mass. They are caught in large quantities by seines, wherever used, and may be captured by hook and line, either in the more robust style of heaving and hauling in the surf, or in the most dilettante style of rod and reel, and even with the artificial fly.

My purpose here is to describe more particularly that mode of taking them by rod and reel, adopted by the gentlemen of the Clubs, and other anglers, at Point Judith, Narragansett, Newport, West Island, Cuttyhunk, Pasque Island, Squibnocket, and other places along the coast, chosen for characteristics favorable as feeding-grounds for the Striped Bass. These are, first, an open exposure to the ocean waves — at least to some degrees of the compass; and then, as complete a fringe of seaweed-covered rocks as is possible. Wherever groups of such rocks or extensive reefs are to be found, the diminutive forests of rock-weed and the various seaweeds constitute



The Horseshoe at the West Island Club, Near Newport, R.I.

the homes of all the crustacea, the small eels, the squid, and the endless mass of the newly hatched fry of all the fish which spawn in the spring. Whilst the water is still and clear, most of these, at least, can hope to escape their enemy; the crustacea, the former class, by flying to the shelter of the overhanging rocks, and hiding under the dense thickets of seaweed; the latter, by rising suddenly to the surface or diving to some shelter. This will be at once apparent to any one who sits near such spots and quietly observes what takes place. Suddenly, and with a rush that startles him, the surface

of the water for some feet is agitated by a mass of scintillating silver bodies, which disappear as quickly as they came to the surface; and it is evident that some prowling monster has suddenly appeared to their keen visions, and they have rapidly ascended — so rapidly that the impetus carries them into the air, whence they swiftly return to their own element, to dart shoreward into shoal water, where their enemy dare not pursue.

Far otherwise is it when the wind has been blowing a steady blast from the ocean, landward. Harder and still harder pound the rising breakers on rocks, seaweed, and bottom; soon the succeeding waves are churned into foam, and the clayey bottom is washed into the undertow, until for hundreds of yards from shore the water becomes white and clouded. Now the poor crabs, shrimps, lobsters, eels, and all crawling life are washed backward and forward until they surrender all attempts to gain safety or shelter, and are soon at the mercy of every wave. This is the long awaited opportunity; and now the timid, nervous, shrinking bass becomes bold and venturesome, and will follow each wave into shallow places, with the assurance that no eye can see his move-

"By George! I've got him."

ments, and that the receding water will carry him out again into safety. Hence all projecting rocks and promontories — where one can sit in safety, and from which a cast can be made into deep water, and where the incoming surf may be permitted to

roll under his perch — are the desiderata for bass-fishers.

One of the most attractive spots in these particulars — chosen for description here as typical of these fishing-grounds — is the group of islands known as the Elizabeth Islands, lying between the mainland of Massachusetts and Martha's Vineyard; a long succession, evidently in prehistoric times connected together, and forming a continuous line from S. S. E. to N. N. W., commencing with Cuttyhunk, and continuing with Nashewena and Pasque, to Naushon; which brings us to Wood's Holl and the main — a stretch of say seventeen miles. North of Cuttyhunk is the little island of Penekese, where the revered Agassiz started a school of ichthyology, which has been abandoned since his death. Between these islands and the mainland on the north lie the waters of Buzzard's Bay; and southward and toward the ocean lie the land of Martha's Vineyard and the water of Martha's Vineyard Sound, — the highway of vessels coming from the West, either outside of Long Island or through Long Island Sound, and bound for Boston — which, at its western entrance, is flanked on the south by beautiful Gay Head, and on the north by Cuttyhunk.

If we visit one of these resorts, we shall see for ourselves in what consists the fascination which draws young and old men, yachtsmen, merchants, and bankers, idlers and busy men, wives and maidens, season after season, from gayer and more fashionable places, to these sober, quiet, and seemingly unattractive spots.

The home of one such fishing-club is reached after a run of an hour and a half from New Bedford; and its situation and the routine of its day are perhaps sufficiently typical of all. The Club-house and outhouses stand prominently on a knoll sentinelled by a lofty flagstaff, from which flies gayly the Stars and Stripes. The whistle of the little steamer that brings visitors advises by a series of "toots" the number of arriving passengers, who hurry ashore, to be welcomed most heartily by members of the Club, ladies and children, to all of whom the arrival of the boat is an "occasion," bringing twice a week letters, papers, and tidings of the busy cities. It is, nevertheless, with a feeling of relief and gracious rest that one waves adieu to the little tug, as after an hour she speeds her way back, knowing that for a period nothing is likely to disturb or annoy him from the outer world. The house soon settles

down after its departure; the ladies return to their bright, pretty sitting-room, the gentlemen to their papers or games of dominoes, and the children to their plays. The visitor is ushered into his bedroom, which may be either a favored private apartment of a member, or one of the Club-rooms. Of the latter, there are a dozen or more — all furnished alike with simple cottage furniture, corresponding with the buildings, which are built entirely of Southern pine, without plaster or any other finish than the varnished wood. It seems at once the business of every member to inquire as to the stranger's outfit of tackle, etc.; and a smile of delight will be seen to pervade more than one face if he avows himself totally unprovided. Tenders of rods, reels, lines, will speedily be made, until he is more than amply equipped.

Learning that full tide is deemed most favorable, and will serve about 5 P.M., he will put on rough clothes, as he is sure to be more or less wet. A thoughtful member comes in, bearing in his arms india-rubber boots and a suit of "oilers," which he advises should be carried along, as one cannot tell at what moment they will be needed. He proposes a walk to the stand,

These loads of eager men.

which he has drawn for the day, and hands the oilers and poles to an attendant, who, he explains, is a "chummer," or one who cuts up and prepares the bait. The island is very rugged in surface, rising into considerable hills and dales, and is covered with a short, tough turf, which has a ten-

dency to run into tufts and little hillocks, interspersed with quantities of field-daisies, golden-rod, purple Michaelmas daisies, and other wild-flowers. As the eye wanders over the hills, huge travelling bowlders are seen; and the thought of glacial action, as the creator of these islands, is suggested, and the suggestion becomes a conviction as palpable moraines are seen stretching in regular lines across the valleys and hills. Along the cliffs which front the Sound, the whole water-front is broken with bowlders, wholly and partly submerged; and the shore itself is so entirely a mass of rocks, from the smallest size up to a number having more than a thousand cubic feet of contents, that the conviction is forced upon one that these islands were, so far as we can surmise, formed by the huge glaciers that Agassiz tells us once covered this portion of our globe, and which in their steady march into the ocean ploughed up, shoved ahead, and deposited, as they melted, these masses of land now the subject of man.

After proceeding a half-mile from the house and turning onto the shore we found, under the shadow of a huge, square mass of granite, half-way between the hill and water, the "chummer" busily arranging

his basket, laden with menhaden packed in ice. He has a square piece of board, which he places on a rock, around which are a mass of *débris* of menhaden bones and heads; and catching up one of these fish from his basket, he hastily scales it, and cuts off the entire side close to the backbone. An incision is made lengthwise through the flesh to the skin, which enables him to double it together, skin to skin and the flesh all outside, and the bait is ready — a mass about four inches in length and weighing about two ounces. The hook, a No. 9/0, is then carefully attached to the line; the hook is furnished with a round knob on its upper end, and tapers from the shank to this knob. Two half-hitches are taken with the line on this taper below the knob; then the end of the line is used to make a third half-hitch over the first two; the body of the line then makes a fourth over the others, and the end being taken between the teeth and the line in one hand, the hitches are drawn tight, whilst the hook is revolved by the other hand, so that when the end is cut off short, the hook will revolve without twisting the line. A good fisherman will do this himself, and when passing in his rod to get a new bait put on, will always

examine the line, to see if it has been chafed or injured, — and if so, it must be cut off and refastened, — or else he may have the pleasure of seeing a good fish lost by his line giving way at the hook at a critical moment. The "chummer" stands waiting to put on the bait. This is a delicate matter, as the hook is passed first through the smaller portion of the bait, then back again from that side entirely through.

It should then be taken by the bend, and drawn through just far enough to

Good Water.

allow the point and barb to be passed a third time through the bait, just far enough to expose the point; and then with a couple of half-hitches, one around both the bait and shank of the hook, and the other on the shank below the knob of the hook alone, the bait is ready to be cast. It will be found on examination that the line pulls directly on the hook without cutting the bait, and if the whole thing is seized by a fish, the pull on the line will drive the barb into the fish's mouth without interference of the bait itself.

One's interest is now centred on the rod; and this is seen to be short, — not exceeding 8 feet in length, — with large free guides and tips of german silver, sometimes of agate. Generally the rod consists of two pieces, — a butt of, say 22 inches, and a tip of 5½ to 6 feet; or it may be one solid bamboo rod, of size, taper, and flexibility to suit fancy. The reel is usually a work of art, in which America excels all other nations. It is quite large, holding from 700 to 900 feet of line, multiplying, and will run freely one minute and a half with a twirl of the finger. The best makers strive to adjust a perfect balance between the handle and its revolution, so that the slightest pres-

sure will stop its motion, and so prevent "overrunning."

Following our friend's suggestion, we will go out on the stand and watch his movements, and thus learn first what is to be done, and then how to do it. He puts on his oiled trousers, to catch the drip of water which always runs off the reel onto knees and legs, and adjusts two thumbs, fingers of crocheted wool, termed "thumb-stalls," with which pressure can be put on the reels, without experiencing the burning its rapidly revolving surface would otherwise produce.

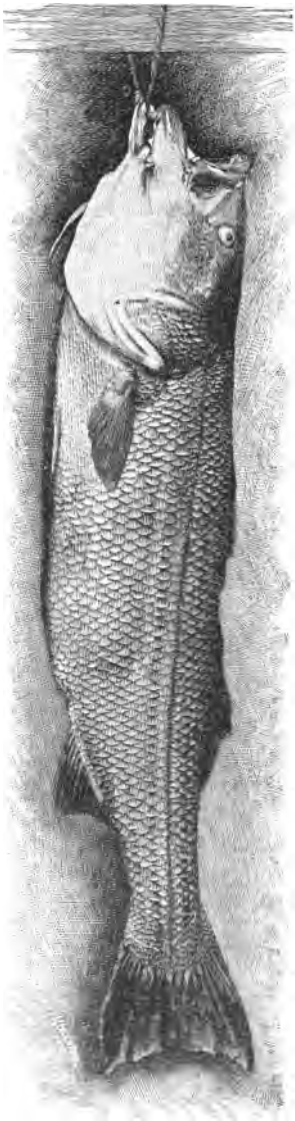
"Tom, have you any chum ready?" to the "chummer."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Well, throw it out." And Tom runs rapidly out on the planks, which extend out from the shore a distance of thirty to fifty feet, at which point the ends are supported by two iron stanchions embedded in one of the huge bowlders there submerged. Upon the ends, about three feet inside, is *lashed* a wooden chair, secured firmly by staples to the stand; and after making his cast, here the fisherman takes his seat. Tom throws vigorously out as far as he can all the remains of the fishes he has cut up, — heads, tails, and back-

bones, and entrails, — all full of oil, which soon create on the surface of the water a "slick;" and as the tide sweeps these particles out, and the odor pervades the water and air, the fish are attracted, and follow up the "slick," looking eagerly for the food it promises. Our friend now examines his reel; and, finding it is slack and the line lying loosely on it, he unreels quite a quantity, rewinding it with great care tightly and very evenly, layer by layer, until he has only an end of about two feet from the tip, to which hangs his bait, looking firm, fresh, and inviting. He now walks to the end of the stand, steps carefully in front of the chair, braces himself with his left foot on the strip clamping the two planks together, and with his right inboard towards the chair, swings the tip and bait back toward the plank. His left hand grasps the butt, his right has the thumb on the reel and fingers around the handle — then with a quick wrist and forearm movement, largely partaking of a jerk, he impels the bait outward at a slight elevation, his eyes fixed on the flying bait, his thumb barely touching the face of the reel, until he sees its flight decreasing and the bait falling; at this instant, by his thumb's pressure, he

stops the revolutions of the reel, and has the satisfaction of seeing the bait fall well out into the water, and *feels* and sees his reel all free, and the line on it firm and undisturbed. Or else his thumb has performed its office of checking, by reason of his seeing the outward flight suddenly and forcibly arrested and his bait flying backward towards the stand, which may always be attributed to over confidence in the reel's condition, and the lack of the precaution of unwinding and rewinding with care. Or if it is not the first cast, undue haste in winding in to get



a fresh bait, or for any other purpose, will be the cause. Dear reader, if you aspire to be a bass fisherman, religiously examine your reel before casting, always and in every case; and unless you see and know that it lies firmly and regularly on the reel, never hesitate, but at once unreel it and lay it on carefully, and thus you will save yourself many an impatient word and action.

At last we have a beautiful cast; the bait has shot out at least 150 feet, and fallen gently into the water; the slack has been gathered in, so that you feel the bait, and know that each movement of the reel moves it slightly; and now comes in the trait of a true fisherman,—patience. That kind of patience which does not lose heart, even though, for days in succession, bait after bait is cast out without return, until the fisherman feels as if he is only feeding blackfish and "cunners," with which the water abounds, and which will eat off the bait sometimes before it is fairly settled in the water. Our chances this afternoon are rather slim, still there is a freshening southwest breeze blowing from Gay Head, and the swash of the surf begins to be heavier; but on looking over the side of the stand, the bottom, with its folds and

waving ribbons of yellow seaweeds is too plainly visible, and as you look down you see a huge eel slowly glide from one rock to another, and schools of green cunners chase a little atom of bait the tide has brought back.

"By George! I've got him," exclaims our friend in the chair; and as we hastily look up, he is seen apparently fighting to keep his rod erect, whilst something at the other end is convulsively dragging it downward, with such jerks as threaten to part the line or break the rod. The reel is whizzing in a threatening way, and our friend has a hard time to keep his thumb on the barrel of the reel, and at the same time avoid having his knuckles rapped and torn by the rapidly revolving handle. His left, as yet, grasps the rod above the reel, and forces the socket into his groin.

"Bring out that belt, Tom," he yells; and Tom comes jumping down the rocks, in one hand his gaff-hook, and in the other a leather belt with a short round pocket sewed on its centre. This Tom hastily buckles about the waist of the fisherman, when, carefully shifting the pole, he places the butt in this pocket, and is thus protected from possible injury, which the great leverage of the fish's pulling on the

The Fishing Stand at Cuttyhunk, Mass.

top of the rod can easily produce. The fish, in the meantime, has succeeded in getting away, say three to four hundred feet now, and shows some hesitation. Our friend has carefully kept a pressure on the reel, whilst indulging his majesty in imaginary freedom of running, but which he begins to realize as "uncanny;" and as our eyes follow the slender thread of the line in its distant entry into the water, it is seen to rise, and presently, with a whirl of his tail, the fish shows himself, looking then to our unskilled eyes a very monster; and as he again disappears we unhesitatingly pronounce him full six feet

long. "Oh, no!" says our friend in reply to our exclamation, "he is not over a thirty-pounder, but he is a good one—see him fight!" and the victim tugs and tugs, with a desperation born of a foresight of his calamity; but in vain, and in another ten minutes he loses heart, and sheers in towards the shore, when our friend is put to all his skill to check and reel him in before he reaches a huge rock inshore for which he heads—just in time! The next wave moves him bodily this side of that rock, and the road is clear to warping him in. This is done by forcibly elevating the pole and keeping it as far over the shoulder as control will permit; then rapidly reeling and lowering the pole until nearly horizontal, and continuing to repeat the process, thus avoiding the terrible strain on the reel itself, which any attempt to reel his dead weight inshore would produce. And now he is slowly dragged towards the stand, and his beautiful color and stripes are plainly seen; but he still strives by ineffectual runs, first to one side and then the other, to avert his fate, though all in vain, as Tom is now bending low down from the outer end of the plank with his sharp, shining gaff-hook extended.

"A little more to the left, sir," he says; and as the fisherman inclines his pole and turns the fish's head, his gaff is extended down, under and across the fish's body; a rapid jerk upward and backward, and it sinks into his silver belly. He is raised from the water, convulsively hugged by Tom, who reaches for the rod, and all of us hurry inshore to inspect and gloat over him. "What does he weigh, Tom?" And with judicial eye Tom measures and lifts him. "I say, thirty pounds."—"Well, I think thirty-five," says the fisherman, the inexperienced looker-on being under the conviction that he should weigh fifty, at least, and impressed with a sense of awe — his huge mouth and head when seen for the first time thus affecting one. It is now too dark to be worth while to fish longer, and we are in fact a little eager to get home and exhibit our catch. So Tom puts him in the basket, covers him carefully with fresh seaweed, recklessly throws all his cut-up bait for chum, and we start for the house, Tom gladly lugging his heavy basket for the glory and triumph he will have on exhibiting him. The "chummer" becomes part and parcel of his "boss," participates in all his excitements, honors, and disappointments, and

constitutes no small element of comfort or discord, as his temper and capacity turn out. As we arrive at the club-house, windows go up, heads are thrust out, eager questioning follows; men and ladies turn out and go to the fish-house to admire the beauty and guess his weight. After the solemn ceremony of ascertaining his exact weight has been performed, he is carefully packed away in the ice-box, to be sent to your most valued friend, or disposed of by the club steward. It is now the judgment of connoisseurs that the flesh of this fish is improved by being kept on ice two or three days at least.

Such are the general features of this noble sport, but subject to great variation.

Mr. Davis's stand, Brenton's Reef, Newport, R.I.

Another day a "cloudy sou'-wester" is prevailing; and the dull roar of the surf, with its heavy pounding, and the crash of the cobblestones rolling downward on the beach as the sea recedes, is plainly heard. On looking from the club-house, over at the point of Naushon, one can see the successive waves rolling on shore, and the "white water" is plainly seen extending hundreds of feet from shore. "A superb bass day!" is the greeting from one to another. And both the wagons are brought into service to take out the fishermen to their respective stands. A novel and exciting scene it is to see these loads of eager men. Some who, in their varied and important stations in life and business, have been wont to look upon financial panics and disturbing causes unmoved, are now excited and anxious about stands and bait, and rods and "chummers," as if their living depended on them. Down we all go; and all the stands on the South Shore are quite sure to be manned that day. Altogether different is the scene and also the work to-day. As the tide and sea rise, the huge breakers get heavier, until finally they dash over the stands; some of the more daring still stick to their chairs, and with oilers and rubber-boots defy the

waves, being excited with the momentary expectation of catching a huge fellow. But this by no means follows, even the most propitious conditions; nor do the most adverse state of wind and weather always work adverse results. The most remarkable catch of bass ever made at Pasque Island was with the water as clear as crystal and perfectly smooth. There happened in a school of huge bass, and they were very hungry, and took the bait without hesitation for more than twenty-four hours after arrival; and one member, comparatively inexperienced as a fisherman, caught nine fish in one day, aggregating 170 pounds.

Nearly, if not quite, all bass fishermen agree in the opinion that the steam menhaden fishermen have greatly injured the bass-fishing — both by depriving them of the food they most eagerly seek, and also by driving them off their feeding-grounds by their huge nets.

A few years ago, from the first of July to the first of November, one could reasonably expect any day to hook a large bass at any of the noted places. Now they can rarely be caught, even where systematically chummed.

But there are many enjoyments in the

"What does he weigh, Tom?"

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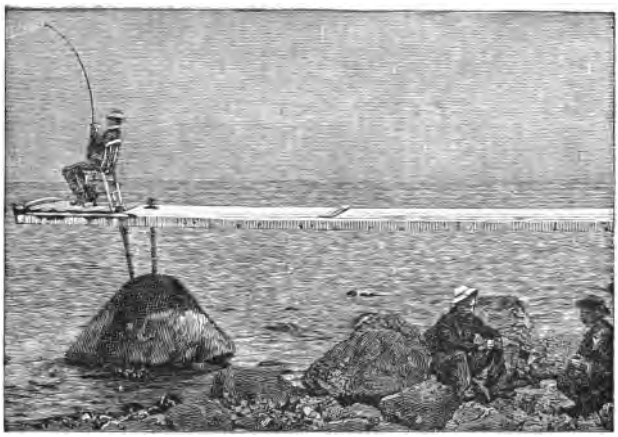
surroundings. The delicious, exhilarating, health-giving air from these pure sea-waters, the soul-inspiring scenery, and varying panorama of vessels constantly moving, create in all frequenters of these islands a real love for them. If you doubt it, come and try it.

I recall one occasion — when on visiting the Club, I learned on arrival that no bass had been caught for three weeks past — on which, with the eagerness invariably accompanying even the sight of the stands and shore, I proceeded with little loss of time to one of my old haunts. The bait had been duly cast, when, on settling myself in the chair and looking about me, to study the water and its indications, I saw in the slightly lapping surf about thirty feet below the stand, what appeared to be the tail of a fish slowly waving in response to the movement of the waves. With an exclamation of surprise, my "chummer" was summoned in conference, and we concluded it was a fish of some kind; and both of us rushed ashore, down the beach, and out on the rocks, and in a few more minutes into the surf, where by aid of the gaff-hook we slowly hauled ashore a superb bass, which on examination showed



Fishing Stand at Pasque Island.

by his pale gills that he had literally "fainted away." A scrutiny of his body soon brought to light the cause. One of his side fins was found bitten off nearly in its full size, close to his side. He had evidently been chased by a shark, or some other voracious fish, which had bitten him in this manner; and in desperation the poor fellow had rushed into the shoal water, where, stranded and almost lifeless, he lay when I saw his tail. After being ashore for fifteen minutes the color of his gills slowly returned to their natural brilliant scarlet. Of course a comparatively short, because unsuccessful, sojourn on the stand sufficed, and we returned to the house in triumph, to experience not the least of

the pleasures of the sport in the congratulations and rejoicings of fellow-members. The fellow weighed 42 lbs.; and the facetious secretary of the Club in solemn voice announced that he "had been appointed a special committee of six, to invite me to immediately leave the island, as for any member to come down and catch a 42-pounder within a few hours, when all hands had been fishing three weeks without results, was not to be borne!" I pleaded in extenuation that I thought when the circumstances of the catch were narrated, I might be pardoned; and then told to the wondering group the story, and showed the damaged fin. I was graciously accorded the pardon of the Club, and the record-book was made to duly recount the incident.

Each day some different state of the water required the change of bait from menhaden to lobster tail or small eels. All vary the sport, and furnish the endless narratives with which a group of old fishermen beguile the placid hours spent in the sitting-room and on the long piazzas. They tell of the enormous fellows they have lost; how this one ran nearly the whole line off his reel, when it was cut off by a bluefish; how that one was so great,

that the utmost pull on the line could not stir him after he had run to the bottom and "sulked," and finally how the line parted, by being chafed off against a rock. A third tells you how his fish sulked, and then pounded his head on the bottom to "spring" the hook out, and succeeded. A fourth tells triumphantly how, when having seen his fish, and knowing him to be a "good one," on his taking to the game of sulking, he had sent his "chummer" back to the house, obtained a boat and another man, rowed outside to the stand, carefully followed the line out until over the fish, and thus secured him. The scarcity of fish is discussed; and every imaginable cause is carefully weighed,—steam menhaden fishing, "night seiners," scarcity of "fry," change of feeding-grounds, etc.

I was once favored with a scene that indelibly printed itself on my memory, and furnished a yarn for one of these councils. A strong northwest wind had been blowing all night, and a lively, brisk sea was setting on the North Shore. I had been fishing for some hours without success; and as the now large waves rolled in, my eye followed them in, commenting on their remarkable clearness and transparency. I made a new cast, and sat down, when on

my left, heading for the bait which I had just thrown out, was a beautiful bass, his stripes and silver side plainly visible, his brilliant eyes staring at me, precisely as mine were fixed on him. The wave rolled him up until he was in bold relief against its green depths; and had he been artificially held there, the picture could not have been more perfect nor animated. His impetus and intention both carried him as far as the bait; and he took it into his mouth, but only held it for an instant. His terror was too vivid to admit of forgetfulness; and I in vain reeled in, and threw again and again.

Another time, I had hooked and successfully sustained the run of a large fish, had turned him, and had warped him in, until he was within fifty feet of me; quite a heavy surf was running, of which I was availing myself to aid in bringing him in, when my "chummer" called attention to the seaweed which was running in on the line and threatened to choke up the tip. Hardly had he spoken, when it jammed the line so that I no longer had the slightest control over the fish. The next wave moved him about ten feet inshore, and on the other side of a huge sunken bowlder; and as the line became taut, al-

though I tried all I could to extend the rod, and give it play, it parted as if a thread, and there I stood, stamping with vexation, utterly helpless, the heavy surf forbidding any attempt to get to him, and looking on his huge majesty rolling from side to side, nearly drowned, and quite unable himself at the moment to make any exertion; but gradually he gathered power, and a sudden conviction that he was no longer a prisoner, and I had the comfort of seeing him slowly glide about, and out to sea. My feelings were much added to by having one of the fair sex sitting on the bank above me, watching the whole operation, and perhaps more amused at my discomfiture than distressed at my loss.

Such are the prominent and prevailing features of the sport. Each locality, however, has its own features and advantages or disadvantages. There can be no doubt that of all the places, the advantages afforded by Brenton-Reef are supreme, especially when aided by the long and strong stands erected by Mr. Winans, now owned by Mr. Davis; and next may be classed the rocks at Narragansett known formerly as "Anthony's." The east end of Montauk has also developed well, and we hear

good reports of "catches" made there. At Block Island also, and at "No Man's Land" at times, remarkable catches have been made, and even down at Cape Cod and Nantucket; but all of them are subject to variation, and the true sportsman finds his enjoyment in all the surroundings more than in the fish itself, or even its capture.

THE HAUNTS

OF THE

BLACK SEA-BASS

By Charles Frederick Holder

T is said that when the purchase of the northwest coast was contemplated by the United States Government, an old English *raconteur* and fly-fisherman remarked, "Oh, let the Yankees have it; the salmon won't rise to a fly!"

Southern California might go by default in this way, as fly-fishing, compared with that of the East, is not to be had, though the San Gabriel, Arroyo Seco, and other cañons have many pools where gleams of light and color flash, telling of the living rainbow lurking in the shadows. If Southern California is deficient in black-bass streams and salmon pools, it possesses the finest marine fishing in North American waters; not only in the size and gamy qualities of the fish, but in the variety of forms which follow each other as the seasons advance, adding new and constant zest to the sport.

The striped-bass fishing has its prototype here in the gamy yellow-tail, *seriola dorsalis*, which attains a weight of forty or fifty pounds, and is as rapid in its movements as the tarpon. An important personage is he who lands a yellow-tail on an ordinary striped-bass rod, reel, and line. Equally gamy as the yellow-tail is the sea-

bass, ranging up to sixty pounds, while the barracuda, tuna, albicore, and others afford the sport esteemed by blue fishermen in the East.

From the Santa Barbara Islands to the Coronados, and beyond, is the field of the Southern California Walton; the islands of the Santa Barbara channel, Santa Catalina and San Clemente, being particularly famous in the piscatorial annals, and the Mecca of lovers of this sport, winter and summer. The island of Santa Catalina is the principal rallying-point, being the largest, possessing the small town of Avalon, a popular summer resort, with numerous bays and harbors protected from the inshore wind that blows in beneath the steady trade. An ideal spot it is, — a series of mountain ranges, from one thousand to twenty-six hundred feet, rising green-hued from the blue waters of the Pacific, and extending twenty-two miles down the coast, and an equal distance from it. From the slopes of the Sierra Madre, forty miles away, the island appears formed of two lofty peaks, sloping gently to the ocean; but standing upon its highest summit, I looked down upon range after range, cutting the island into a maze of cañons that wound in every direction to

Hauling Ashore the Black Sea-Bass

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the sea. Near its northern portions two harbors extend in from opposite sides, the island evidently at one time having been separated, the isthmus, as it is called, being but a few hundred feet across; from this it widens out to six miles or more. The island is really a gigantic mountain range projecting from the ocean. The cliffs are majestic, beetling, rising sheer from the sea, broken into strange forms, and tinted with folds and splashes of color. The only beaches are at the mouths of the cañons, or perhaps where the continued falling of rocks in land-slides caused by the winds have formed a vantage-ground for waves. On the west coast the sea assails the cliffs with sullen roar, and the inshore wind whirls up the cañons, beating the fog against the rocks, and bearing it aloft, where it is dissipated by the radiating heat of the mountains. On the east the water is calmer, often like glass, affording favorable conditions for boating and fishing.

The air of this island in the sea seems redolent with romance. Three hundred years ago Cabrillo, a Spanish adventurer, cast anchor in one of its harbors, and named it La Victoria, after one of his vessels. In 1602 Viscaino visited and gave it the present name of Santa Catalina.

Father Ascencion, who accompanied him, describes the inhabitants as sun worshippers, one of whose temples he found near the two harbors. In these early days the island had a large and prosperous native population; every well-watered cañon had its village, and I have found evidences of them on some of the highest ranges.

One of my first visits to Santa Catalina was for the purpose of opening some of the ancient graves of these people; and while thinking the matter over with "Mexican Joe," who has lived thirty years on the island, I took out an old bass-rod that had seen service on the St. Lawrence, and began looking it over.

"What you catch with that?" asked my companion, with a curious look on his strong Indian face.

"Bass, black," I answered nonchalantly, whirling the reel, and listening to the music.

"What!" retorted Joe, laughing; then, "How much he weigh?"

"Five pounds," thinking of a certain afternoon on the river.

"Oh!" continued Joe, "I thought you mean black sea-bass."

"Well, how much does he weigh?" I asked.

"How much he weigh? You want catch with that?" said Joe, pointing to the rod with scorn. "Why, man, he weigh five hundred pounds. Yes, black sea-bass run from seventy-five to five hundred, seven hundred pounds."

I ran over in my mind the various heavy-weight tackles, — the tarpon, striped-bass, salmon rods, — and came to the conclusion that a flag-staff with a donkey-engine reel attachment might do; yet decided, then and there, to take a black sea-bass, if it was among the possibilities. I announced my determination interrogatively to my guide and oarsman.

"Of course you catch one if you know how. I show you where he live. It take patience sometimes," was the reply.

I was well supplied with this necessary, and a few days later found myself gliding away in the deep shadows of the rocks, headed for one of the haunts of the deep-sea bass. The water here was so clear objects forty feet below could be distinctly seen, glances into the depths showing an almost tropical condition of things. Bright-hued fishes, yellow and orange, darted by, disappearing in patches of wiry seaweed that gleamed with blue and iridescent tints. In the watery space fairy-

like *medusæ* moved lazily about, rising and falling, while here, there, and everywhere flashed a veritable gem in red, gold, blue, green, and amber, the minute crustacean sapphirina.

When off a point which juts boldly into the sea, the keeper of the fortunes of the black sea-bass ceased rowing, cast anchor, and we swung in the current that ran along the rocky shores to the north. The tackle produced by my oarsman was not æsthetic. The line was almost as large as that employed in the halibut fisheries of the East, while the hook was perhaps twice as large as a tarpon-hook, arranged with a well-working swivel. Live bait, a whitefish which we soon caught, was attached, with a sinker sufficient to carry it down. The line was then dropped over, and that patient waiting which makes all successful fishermen philosophers begun.

Three hundred—yes, one hundred years ago, a boat could not have dropped anchor here without being the object of hundreds of eyes, and the news would have been flashed from hill-top to cañon to the various camps; now the only observers were the shag that flew along near the boat, its long, snake-like neck extended, startling the flying-fish into the air in fright, and

"Three hundred and forty-two and a half, sir!"

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a wondering pair of eyes that stared at us, telling of a sea-lion making the grand rounds; while the leaping forms near the shore were seals, bound for their rookery around the bend. The whistle of plumed quail came softly over the crags from the neighboring cañon, and the gentle, musical ripple of the waves lulled us to fancied repose.

I had been watching the interesting face of my Mexican guide, wondering at his life, when I noticed his eyes suddenly grow large; then he lifted the line gently with thumb and forefinger. It trembled, thrilled like the string of a musical instrument touched by some player beneath the sea. Slowly it took his fingers down to the water's edge.

A bass? Yes. No snap, no sudden rush, no determined break for liberty as I had seen the black bass make. I was disappointed; a simple drag. But the Mexican smiled, and passed me the line, arranging with the other hand the coil in the bottom of the boat.

"He's a young one," he remarked. "Pay him out ten feet, then jerk, an' stan' clear the line."

These instructions took but a few seconds, yet the line was now gliding through

my hands like a living thing — four, eight, ten feet. Suddenly it tautened, and for a single second the tension hurled the sparkling drops high in air; then, leaning forward, I jerked the line with all my strength. I have watched the silvery form of the tarpon as, like a gleam of light, it rushed into the air, shaking, quivering before the fall, and have handled large fish of many kinds; but I was unprepared for the deep-water tactics of this king of the bass. For a brief period there was no response, as if the fish had been stricken with surprise at this new sensation; then a smoke, a succession of snake-like forms rising into the air — nothing but the line leaping from its coil. "Ah, he only a young one," said Joe; "take hold."

In some way I had lost the line in this rush. Watching my opportunity, I seized it again, and by an effort that thoroughly tested the muscles, brought the fierce rush to an end. Then came heavy blows distinctly given, as from the shoulder, evidently produced as the fish threw its head back in quick succession.

"Take it in!" said my companion excitedly; and bending to the work I brought the line in, fighting for every inch that came, when the Mexican shouted a warn-

ing. Whizz! and the coils leaped again into the air. Nothing could withstand the rush — a header directly for the bottom and away.

The anchor had been hauled up by the Mexican at the first strike; and now, with line in hand, we were off, the boat churning through the water, hurling the spray over us, and bearing waves of gleaming foam ahead.

"Take in!" cries Joe, who stands by the coil; and again, slowly fighting against the dull blows, the line comes in. Ten feet gained, and, whizz-eee! as many more are lost. In it comes once more, hand over hand, the holder of the line bending this way and that, trying to preserve a balance and that tension which would prevent a sudden break. Now the fish darts to one side, tearing the water into foam, leaving a sheet of silvery bubbles, and swinging the boat around as on a pivot. Now it is at the surface — a fleeting vision followed by a rush that carries the very gunwale under water. This, followed by a sudden slacking of the line, sends despair to the heart; he is gone, the line floats. No, whizz! and away again, down. All the tricks of the sturdy black bass this giant of the tribe indulges in, except the

mid-air leaps which gladden the heart of the angler. Quick turns, downward rushes, powerful blows, mighty runs, this gamy creature makes, fighting inch by inch, leaving an impression upon the mind of the fisherman that is not soon forgotten.

With a large rope, and by taking turns, the fish could have been mastered, but such methods were not considered sportsmanlike here. It must be taken free-handed, a fight at arm's-length, and being such, the moments fly by; it is half an hour, and we have not yet seen the outline of our game. Gradually the rushes grow less, the blows are lighter, and what is taken is all gain.

"It take your wind," said Joe, with a low laugh.

So it had; and I stood braced against the gunwale after the final dash — a burst of speed — to see a magnificent fish, black, lowering, with just a soupçon of white beneath, pass swiftly across the line of vision, whirling the boat around end for end.

"You've got him," from astern, is encouraging, yet I have my doubts; an honest opinion would have brought the confession that I was in the toils. But the flurry was the last. Several sweeps around the boat, and the black sea-bass lay along-

side, covering boat and men with flying spray with strokes of its powerful tail.

"It is a small one," ejaculates my man, wiping the spray from his face. Imagine a small-mouthed black bass enlarged, filled out in every direction until it was six feet long, and plump in proportion; tint it in rich dark hues, almost black, with a lighter spot between the pectoral fins; give it a pair of eyes as large as those of an ox, powerful fins and tail, a massive head, ponderous, almost toothless jaws, and you have the black sea-bass, or Jew fish — the best fighter, the largest bony fish in Pacific waters. Too large to be taken into the boat, it had to be towed in; and finally, after being stunned with an axe after the quieting method applied to muskallonge in the St. Lawrence, we got under way, the huge body floating uncomfortably behind, materially retarding the progress.

The entry to Avalon Harbor was one of triumph, as at that season the capture of a black sea-bass was a new thing to visitors; and as the magnificent creature was hauled up on the sands by willing hands, the entire population gathered about to listen to the details of the sport. Then came the weighing. "Three hundred and forty-two and a half, sir," said a Mexican youth

who had triced the fish up; "better than the average." Glory enough for one day.

During this summer, at Santa Catalina, about twenty of these fish were caught, ranging from eighty pounds to three hundred and fifty. All were females, ready to spawn, and had come in to Pebble Beach for this purpose, depositing their eggs in August and September. This locality has always been a famous place for them, and ten thousand pounds were taken there in a single day four years ago. At that time there was a systematic fishery, the meat being dried, and — tell it not in Gath! — sold as boneless cod. My oarsmen informed me that the bass had been frightened off. These fishermen killed the fish on the spot, throwing the heads overboard; and so the bass left, only comparatively few having been seen since.

This is a native version. The fish undoubtedly migrate, going into deeper water during the winter, or possibly to the south.

It is often said that there is little pleasure in taking deep-sea fish; but to capture the black sea-bass, free-handed, play it fairly, and bring it to the gaff, is an experience that well compares in sport and excitement with hand-line tarpon-fishing on the Gulf coast.

TARPON FISHING IN FLORIDA

By Robert Grant

Hotel at St. James City.

IT is likely that to ninety-nine persons out of every hundred, even though piscatorially inclined, the terms "tarpon" and "tarpon-fishing" will convey no meaning. Twelve years ago no one could boast of having taken a tarpon with rod and reel; and although the sport is now tolerably familiar to devoted anglers, the average individual who counts on getting away for a fortnight in the course of the year to kill something in the fish

line is still likely to inquire, "What is a tarpon?"

The tarpon is a fish, known to naturalists as *Megalops thrissoides*, ranging from fifty to two hundred pounds in weight, and from four and one-half to over six feet in length; not unlike a cross between a huge herring — to which family it belongs — and a huge bluefish in its general proportions, with large, protuberant eyes and an ugly mouth that opens on the fish's nose, so to speak, covered on either side with a hard, bony, semicircular flap that gives the effect of a jowl. Behind, and contiguous to the dorsal fin, is a sort of bony bayonet called the "feather," some eight or nine inches long, that protrudes into the air in the direction of the tail, forming an acute angle with the line of the back. The body is covered with brilliant argentine scales, which give the fish the effect of having been laved in silver, and which have won for it the title of the "Silver King." These scales, which are circular and slightly scalloped on the part of the edge that is overlapped, vary from one inch to three inches and a half across. The silvery epidermis covers only the exposed portion, which is about one-fourth of the circumference. The

remaining surface is a slightly yellowish-white, not dissimilar in hue to mother-of-pearl, though without its iridescence; translucent, but not transparent, and shiny on the inner side. They are hard, thin, and of shell-like fibre. After being removed from the fish and dried, they curl up so as to remind one of a Saratoga chip, but will, if moistened and compressed, regain, at least for a short time, their former shape. The extreme brilliancy of the silvery portion becomes tarnished by degrees, inclining either to yellow or black; but the permanent color is still beautiful and astonishing. The back of the fish is black, and the silvery effect gradually begins at a line well above the eye.

Some anglers have seen fit to perpetuate their triumphs by having specimens of these monsters mounted on a panel, which is accomplished by splitting the fish in two, leaving an ample margin at top and bottom, and treating the necessary half with arsenic and other condiments prized by the taxidermist. They form magnificent trophies for the hall or dining-room of a large house; and when gazing at a hundred-pound tarpon, which is certainly rather below than above the average weight of the fish, one finds difficulty in believing

that it has been captured with rod and reel. Beside it the lordly salmon seems to sink into insignificance. They are sometimes eaten, but not with avidity by those who have tried them before, as the flesh is coarse.

In a book on fishes, published in New York in 1884, appears the following statement: "Imagine a herring-shaped fish five or six feet long, with brilliant silvery scales the size of half a dollar, in schools of a dozen or twenty, leaping from the blue surface of a summer sea. This is all that the angler usually sees of the tarpon. Sometimes one of these glittering, rushing monsters takes the hook. What follows? The line runs out with great speed till it has all left the reel, where it parts at its weakest point, and the fish goes off leaping seaward. When hooked on a hand-line similar results follow. No man is strong enough to hold a large tarpon unless he is provided with a drag or buoy in the shape of an empty keg attached to the line, which may retard or even stop the fish after a while. Aided by a buoy, the tarpon is sometimes taken with a harpoon or seines." Since this declaration was made, evidently in full sincerity, probably no less than one hundred tarpon have been killed

The Reel.

with the rod and reel, to say nothing of the unscientific hand-line. To Mr. W. H. Wood, a New York gentleman, belongs the honor of having been the first to capture one with sportsman's tackle; an event to which the London *Observer* of Aug. 25, 1886, refers in the following enthusiastic language: "Here, at last, there is a rival to the black bass of North America, to the *Silurus glanis* of the Danube, to our own European salmon, and possibly even to the sturgeon, were that monster capable of taking a hook and holding it in its leach-like sucker of a mouth. Sportsmen may yet go to Florida for the *tarpon*, as they now go to the Arctic zone for the reindeer, walrus, and musk-ox." (By the way, why does the *Observer* claim for Europe sole proprietary rights in the salmon?) Up to the present date the largest tarpon taken with rod and reel was one killed by Mr. John G. Hecksher of New York,

which is recorded on the score-book at St. James City as weighing one hundred and eighty-four pounds. Somewhat larger fish have been taken with the hand-line and in seines, but there is no authentic testimony that they exceed two hundred pounds.

The field of battle is the seacoast of southwestern Florida. The tarpon, or tarpum (for the fish is known popularly by either name), has its habitat (according to the valuable compilation "The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States," 1884) in the western Atlantic and in the Gulf of Mexico, ranging north to Cape Cod, and south at least to northern Brazil. It is somewhat abundant in the West Indies, and stragglers have been taken as far to the eastward as the Bermudas. It is the "Silver-fish" of Pensacola, the "Grande Écaille" (large-scale fish), or "Grandy Kye," as it is pronounced, and sometimes spelled, and the "Savanilla" of Texas. Those interested in the fish from the angler's standpoint have confined their attention to the waters of Charlotte Harbor on the Gulf of Mexico and southwestern coast of Florida. Here the fish are found in comparative abundance, though the same is unquestionably true of that coast still farther to the south from

The Cast.

Punta Rassa to Whitewater Bay; for the sport is still in its infancy, and comparatively few fishermen have made investigations on their own account, being content to try their fortunes where others have been successful. There seems every reason to believe, however, that although the tarpon is known on the eastern coast of Florida, its favorite waters are the Gulf of Mexico; and whoever wishes to catch it is likely to fare better there than if he goes to Jupiter, Lake Worth, and the other points on the southeastern coast so deservedly famed for fishing of many other kinds.

At present there are two recognized tarpon fishing-grounds, or rather fishing-

camps, — for the waters fished by the frequenters of each are adjacent, — St. James City and Punta Rassa. Looking at the map of southwestern Florida, you will notice, at some distance to the southward of Tampa, Charlotte Harbor, lying between the 26th and 27th parallels of latitude, which extends no less than thirty miles from north to south, and varies from ten to fifteen miles in width. It is protected on its westerly side by the islands or keys Gasparilla, La Costa, Captiva, and Sanibel, which form a sort of natural barrier against the storms in the Gulf of Mexico; and within these comparatively peaceful waters is situated Pine Island, fourteen miles in length, and from two to four in breadth, on the southerly end of which is St. James City, so called, a village that owes its present flourishing condition to the enthusiasm of tarpon fishermen. Opposite to it, to the southeast, on the mainland, and but a few miles distant, is Punta Rassa, the other resort. Excepting yachtsmen who live on board their vessels and cruise along the coast, persons desiring to kill a tarpon have hitherto made their headquarters at one of these two places.

At St. James City, which is moderately tropical in its vegetation, — and which is

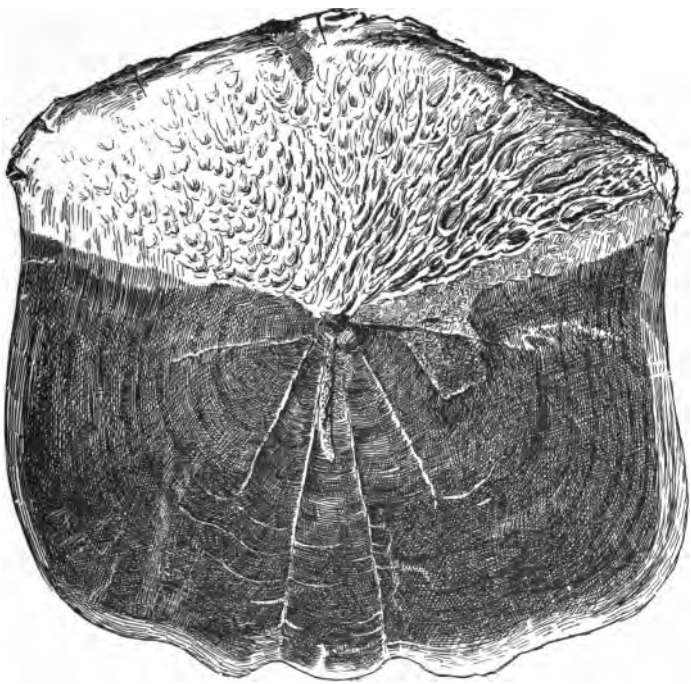
rapidly being made more so by the transplantation of baby lime, lemon, pineapple, banana, guava, cocoanut, and other plants calculated to inspire the interest of Northerners, — there is a comfortable hotel maintained by Northern proprietors. It is a delightful spot from the angler's point of view; the winter climate is perfect, and the fishing of all kinds is excellent, including a large variety of fish able to offer not too stout resistance to the rod and reel — to say nothing of sharks, Jewfish, and other monsters only too ready to carry off all one's line, and disappear without showing themselves above water. Ladies can accompany their husbands and brothers without risk of being otherwise than very comfortable, or even of being bored, unless it is by the everlasting discussion as to the habits of the "Silver King" and the proper mode of capturing him, which goes on incessantly. Punta Rassa has equal advantages in the way of climate and facilities for fish, and is frequented by many of the most successful tarpon fishermen. The "Tarpon House" there is distinctly a sportsman's resort, as the accommodations, though comfortable, are as yet primitive.

To reach either of these places you take

the train from Jacksonville to Punta Gorda by way of the Jacksonville, Tampa & Key West, and the Florida Southern Railroads, a twelve hours' journey. Punta Gorda, which is the terminus of the railroad, is at the head of Charlotte Harbor, and consists of possibly a dozen shanties and a fine hotel with accommodations for five hundred people. All the rooms are built on one side of the house, to command the water view. A long pier runs out from the hotel, off which all kinds of fish except tarpon are taken in abundance. Tarpon could undoubtedly be caught within a few miles of Punta Gorda, along the Myakka River, and elsewhere, if one were to make a study of the fishing-ground; but anglers prefer to push on in the little steamer Alice Howard, which starts from there three times a week, a five hours' trip, to St. James City, and slightly longer to Punta Rassa. The company interested in the development of St. James City expect to run a steamer daily another season, and there is talk of a railroad later.

Arriving at the San Carlos Hotel, at St. James City, early in March of the present year (1889), I was greeted by the unwelcome information that tarpon were very scarce, owing to the coolness of the

weather. Unless the atmosphere and water are warm, they are not disposed to bite. Heat causes them to run in from the Gulf to cruise along the coast, preparatory to mating and spawning; but a "norther," or "cold wave," drives them back into deep water. They are caught as early as January, and from then the fishing gradually improves as the weather grows warmer. Tarpon fishermen have



Scale of a Tarpon (actual size).

begun to realize that just at the time the Florida hotel-keepers close their houses the fishing becomes very good; and instead of going south in January or February, they are disposed to defer their trips until the end of March, or, better, until April. Of course many will prefer to take the chance of getting fish at a season when the Southern climate is most agreeable, and our Northern winter most severe; but purely from the standpoint of sport, there is no doubt that the later one goes the more liable one is to catch tarpon. To be sure, the flies may then be disagreeable, and the weather uncomfortably warm; but, on the other hand, it will not be necessary to pass days of anxious waiting for the wind to change and the water to rise to a proper temperature. Let it be added that, though the hotel at St. James City has hitherto been closed early in April, Mr. Schultz has his "Tarpon House" at Punta Rassa open all the year round.

I found that up to my arrival, on March 14th, only nine tarpon had been taken this season at St. James City, and not quite so many, according to report, at Punta Rassa. Of these nine, five had fallen to one rod. There were about twenty fishermen in the house, several of whom had

been there since early in January. One gentleman had fished for three successive seasons without landing a tarpon. The sport is still so thoroughly in its infancy that I found a variety of theories as to tackle in process of being tested. I had been advised at home to bring with me an ordinary eight-and-a-half-foot ash sea-bass rod in three pieces; but I was very shortly convinced that a rod in one piece is much more trustworthy, as the strain upon the joints while playing a tarpon is, at times, very severe. The choice of the wood is largely a matter for individual preference or caprice, though I believe that a well-tested bamboo cannot be excelled for this kind of fishing. Some of the rods were composed of a short butt and one long joint, which is preferable to the three-jointed rod, but less effective than a single piece. The length varies from seven to eight and a half feet; those anglers who aim to kill their fish in the shortest possible time use as near an approach to a stick as the sportsmanlike spirit of the locality will tolerate without demur; but the ambition should now rather be to increase the length and suppleness of the rod, so as to adopt as nearly as may be the dimensions of the salmon-rod, which has never

yet, I believe, been successfully tried on the "Silver King."

One needs a large multiplying-reel that will hold comfortably two hundred yards of line, and is furnished with a click that can be turned on and off at will. Even if the socket in which it is set contains a pin, the reel should be lashed on, and a leather drag should be securely stitched to one of the inner bars of the reel, whether one uses a thumb-stall or not. It will also be found convenient to have the handle long enough to protect one's fingers from contact with the side of the reel. I used a fifteen-thread linen line, which is strong enough — though most of the fishermen at St. James City were supplied with eighteen and twenty-one thread; and for a hook one cannot improve on a 10/0 Dublin bend, Limerick forged and ringed. The serious point of controversy, and the one which still remains to be solved, is as to the material of the snood or snell connecting the line with the hook. The tarpon has a bony mouth, in which no hook will take firm hold; and it is therefore absolutely necessary to let the fish gorge the bait in order to have any chance of securing him. Moreover, although the tarpon has no teeth, its lips, or the flaps

Tarpon Fishing in Florida

Ready to Gaff

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which clothe either cheek, and which at the corners become veritable "scissors," are so excessively hard and corrugated that the ordinary line would chafe off or be snipped off in a very short time. It is necessary, therefore, to supplement the line with some sort of snood, about twenty-seven inches long, in order to allow for the gorging of the hook. A variety of devices has been tried. It was thought that small chains would answer the purpose, until it was demonstrated that sharks and kindred pests, which are just as likely to take the bait as a tarpon, cannot be got rid of without cutting the line, whereas they will immediately bite off any softer substance than metal. It is said, also, that the tarpon is apt to feel the chain, and to throw out the bait before it is gorged. At any rate, experienced anglers have discarded them. The present judgment is in favor of a laid cotton line that is practically a cod-line of $\frac{1}{8}$-inch or even $\frac{3}{16}$-inch diameter. This, it is claimed, will endure the action of the tarpon's lips for a long period, and yet yield instantly to the teeth of a shark. But while it has proved fairly satisfactory, I was advised by the gentleman who had landed five out of the nine tarpon taken this season, to wrap my $\frac{1}{8}$-inch

snood with fine copper wire. This I did, although some of the other fishermen shook their heads, declaring that a shark would not be able to cut the wire; but my adviser was of the contrary opinion, though he was inclined to believe that a $\frac{3}{16}$-inch cod-line, tightly laid, ought to be stout enough to render wire unnecessary. The snoods which he had of this kind were very hard, and unlike those generally in use, which being loosely laid had the effect of being soft and yielding. I was disposed to think that his were the best, in spite of the fact that they would offer more direct resistance while chafing. One or two other anglers thought they had solved the difficulty by incasing the snood with rubber, on the theory that thus there would be no chance for friction; but there was evidence that this contrivance had not proved particularly efficacious. Indeed, the whole question of snoods is in embryo. It seems desirable that the cotton snoods should be blackened a little, so as to become, when soaked, as near the color of the water as possible. As tarpon are shy fish, one cannot be too careful of frightening them.

I was called with the rest, on the morning after my arrival, so as to be able to

get away from the house at about seven. There is said to be no advantage in an early start, except that the first boats off obtain the choice of grounds; tarpon are more likely to bite on the flood tide than at any especial time of day. Each angler has his man and boat, an ordinary lap-streak row-boat about eight feet in length, such as is commonly used at seaside resorts. There is, of course, a considerable choice in guides; and it is important for a novice to get a skilful boatman, who knows the grounds. The hotel is about one-third of a mile from the wharf, and for the convenience of everybody a wagonet and pair makes trips perpetually for a trifling remuneration. The pier, as at Punta Gorda, juts out several hundred yards, and from the end of it sheep's-head are taken in profusion. Only a few days before my arrival a large leopard shark had been hooked and landed from the same place.

The tarpon grounds lie anywhere from two to eight miles from the pier. My boatman — a white man, as most of the boatmen at St. James City are — advised our trying the nearest, Matalacha Pass, as it was called. The best places for fishing at this season are on the points of the

oyster-bed bars in the shallower water on the edge of the channel. The fish come in with the tide, and follow the winding channel, which runs close to the bars. The whole harbor is intersected by these oyster-beds; and there are many sand-keys and numerous islands completely covered with mangrove bushes, which seem to spring out of the sea, so deeply are the roots immersed. The mangrove is extremely prolific, and is largely in excess of all other growths in this neighborhood.

I anchored by chance not far from the gentleman who had killed the five tarpon, and very soon another angler took up a position some two hundred yards in my rear. There was good fishing for all three boats, my guide said; but it is an unwritten law that when a tarpon is hooked, the other boats on the ground shall be kept out of the way of the fortunate man. I observed that each of my rivals had two rods in use, one of which was tended by the boatman, although the process of tending is a very simple one until a fish takes hold.

Some one has well described the waiting experience in tarpon-fishing as "sitting in a Turkish bath looking at a string." You bait your hook with a collop of mullet, and

cast just as you would for striped bass, letting the bait sink to the bottom. You give a little slack, and then you have nothing to do but sit still until something happens. You may sit still the whole day without anything happening. I did: not a single genuine bite did I have from half-past seven until half-past four; and though it was not particularly hot, my man Pierce said that it usually was, and that I should do wisely in supplying myself before starting out again with a broad-brimmed Panama hat, such as every one else wore.

At first it was rather interesting. My reel unfortunately was without a click, and the action of the tide made the line run out a little, unless I kept my finger firmly on it; so that, as I had been told that a tarpon begins by stealing off quietly, I had numerous false alarms, thinking every now and then that something was trifling with my bait. In the meantime my boatman was cutting up mullet, and throwing it overboard to attract the fish to our neighborhood. Mullet is the only bait they are known to take. He also suggested putting out a hand-line, as I had only one of my rods with me; but this I forbade, not wishing to diminish my chances of landing a tarpon with rod and reel. Forty-

eight hours later, as it happened, two gentlemen who were using a hand-line in addition to three rods, had their only strike of the day on the hand-line, very much to their disgust. With the exception of changing the bait about once an hour, as it becomes water-soaked, there is nothing to do but be patient. Instead of a tarpon, one may hook a shark, a large channel bass, or a grouper. Small fish are not apt to bite on the tarpon grounds, but sharks are often very troublesome. During the present season a gentleman who was fishing with his rods chanced to hook simultaneously a tarpon and a shark. Although the tarpon jumped out of the water, he was for some moments unable, owing to the crossing of the lines, to discern which fish was on which, so as to cut off the unwelcome visitor. A tarpon invariably reveals himself by jumping out of water as soon as he feels the hook. More tarpon are lost by premature tension of the line than through any other cause. The novice is properly cautioned by everybody to let a tarpon carry off some half a dozen fathoms of line before checking him in the least. Usually the fish hooks himself, and is only too apt to feel the hook before the bait is gorged, in which

He was six feet long, and weighed one hundred and thirty-two pounds.

case he leaps out of water, and shakes his head violently in attempts to get rid of it — attempts which are sure to be successful in case the barb be not well lodged in his gullet. After forty or fifty feet have run out, one may safely strike, and drive the hook home into whatever the prize may be. If nothing shows itself, and the line flies out at a terrible rate, you have probably got a shark, which, unless very large, you can doubtless drown if you wish, if the disagreeable customer does not relieve you of his presence by biting off

the hook. As a matter of practice you will be likely to cut the line yourself without further ado. A large channel bass of twenty or thirty pounds also will occasionally take the bait, or a grouper — a delicious fish of the perch family, that makes very stout resistance for its size, which does not exceed fifteen pounds. The tactics of the grouper are to get into a hole or cave, from which it can be dislodged, if at all, only with great difficulty. My neighbor of the five tarpon hooked two groupers in the course of the forenoon, and preferred in each instance to cut his line rather than waste time in trying to bring them to terms. While we were fishing for tarpon, the wife of this same angler was trolling with a light rod in the near distance with great success, taking every few minutes one of the many lively fish, channel bass (redfish) "sea trout" (squeteauge or weakfish), cavalli, and others with which the water of Charlotte Harbor abounds. Later in the day her example was imitated by both of my companions; but I was advised by my guide to remain at my post, for the reason that a tarpon might take hold at any moment. He intimated that it was too much the custom for sportsmen, after having fished for tar-

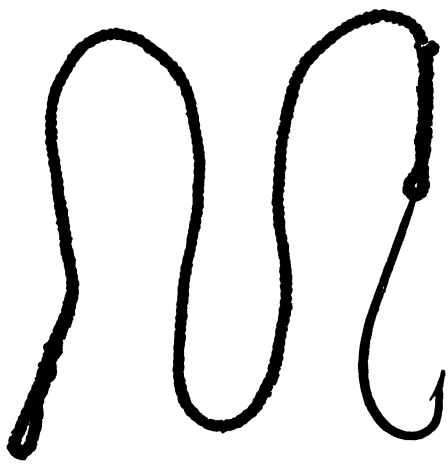
pon two or three nours, to be willing to sacrifice the chances of big game to the paltry satisfaction of filling one's boat with ordinary fish. I was Spartan enough to act upon his counsel, even to the extent of eating my luncheon in the boat with my finger still on the line, without going ashore. About one o'clock, when the tide turned, I shifted my position to another ground about a mile distant, where Pierce thought we should be more likely to hook fish returning with the ebb; and there I remained until nearly five o'clock, without getting a bite of any kind.

It was hardly inconsistent with good-fellowship that I did not feel any keen regrets to find, on reaching the hotel, that no one of the fifteen other fishermen had fared any better than I as regards tarpon. The landing-stage at the wharf was covered with small fish, of from two to ten pounds weight, but no one could boast of having even hooked a "Silver King." The general verdict was that the atmosphere and water were still a little cool for good tarpon-fishing.

The next morning dawned warm and beautiful. I was up betimes, with the intent of visiting a more distant ground known as the "Six-mile Rookery," where

I again found myself in company with the champion fisherman of the season, whose wife, by the by, had the ill-luck in the course of the day to lose a twenty-pound channel bass, through the clumsiness of her boatman, just as it was ready for the landing-net. When not far from the ground, we noticed numerous shoals of mullet, which is a favorable sign ; and presently those in the boat ahead signed to us to be still, and pointed to the water, on which the fins of a troop of tarpon were plainly visible. We anchored in hope, in spite of the consciousness that fish in shoals do not take the hook as readily as when travelling alone or in small detachments. We fished diligently without the least success for some time, and then shifted our ground a little farther on, as we had been lured by the sight of the tarpon on the surface to make fast, at first, somewhat short of the usual place. Our new anchorage was, as on the day before, rather less than a fourth of a mile from shore, and in water not more than ten or twelve feet deep. Here let me add that later in the season, when the weather has grown hot, tarpon are taken in the shallow water close to the shore as well as on the edges of the oyster-reefs. I had two rods with

me on this day, so as not to throw away any chances, and suggested to my man the advisability of lashing on my reels; but he scoffed at the idea. Out went the hooks well furnished with fresh mullet, and again we abandoned ourselves to waiting. Again, too, we waited in vain; waited in the hot sun, for it was warm at last, and I



was glad to don my new shade-hat. We had no bites; and yet the situation was tolerably exciting, from the fact that every now and then a tarpon would spring out of water on one side of us or the other, and fall back with a grand splash, never very near to us, and yet sufficiently so to fill us with hope of better things, although,

as an old salmon fisherman, I knew that jumping fish are not apt to bite. Still it was a great deal to be sure that they were there. Three hours passed, and it was luncheon-time again. Rather despondently, I must confess, did I masticate the sandwiches, doughnuts, hard-boiled eggs, grape-fruit, and bananas which my dinner-pail contained. Just as I had finished, there was another splash. A tarpon had jumped behind us not more than two hundred yards away. My companion almost immediately pulled up his anchor; but instead of moving to where the fish had jumped, as I expected, put his boat toward the shore. "He has gone ashore to fish for mullet," said my man. Whereupon I recalled that he had expressed the intention of spending the early part of the night on the ground, for tarpon will bite by moonlight; then the tide would be at the flood again, for now it was beginning to ebb. His guide had a seine with him, with which he was able to snare bait from the shoals of mullet by wading knee-deep and casting it over them.

However, although the outlook was not promising, we shifted our anchorage to where the last tarpon had made his splash, and put out our hooks again.

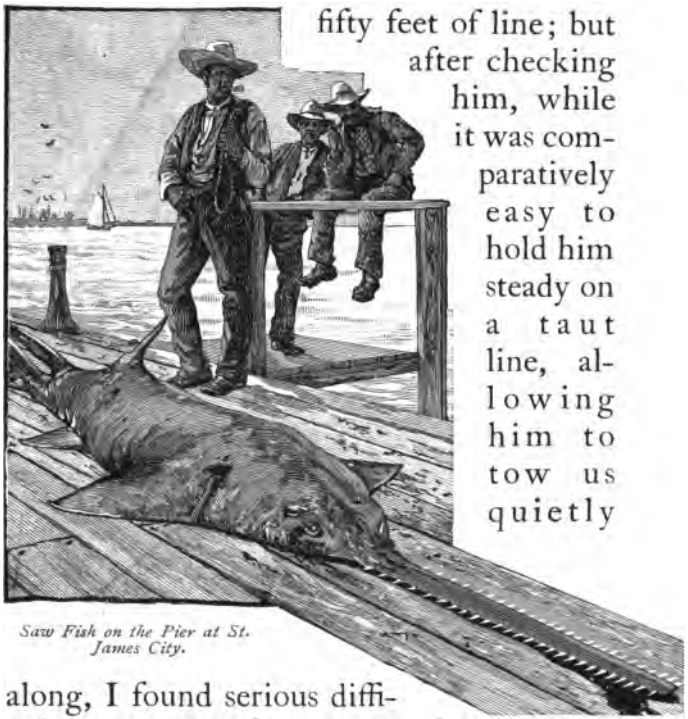
It was unrefreshingly hot, and just about slack water, scarcely ebbing at all; and there we sat for another hour, until, rather wearied at the monotony of the thing, I began to practise casting, in which I was not very proficient. The other rod lay between me and my boatman, under his supervision. I was reeling in my line after a short, abortive cast, when suddenly Pierce made an exclamation, and I turned to see his line running out rapidly; so rapidly, in fact, that the handle of the reel knocked a piece out of his forefinger. He reached me the rod; and just after I had seized it, taking care to exert no pressure, a large silvery mass leaped out of water straight into the air and fell back again.

"A tarpon, and a big fellow!" cried Pierce.

In considering any statement as to the height a fish jumps out of water, it is important to know whether the narrator has included the length of the fish in making up his figures. That is to say, if a fish is six feet long, and leaps from its native element so that the tip of its tail is two feet clear of the surface, good story-tellers will claim that it has jumped eight feet out of water. Others will take oath to only two. It is sufficient to state that the tarpon in

question jumped either two feet or eight, according to the individual preference of the reader. At that time he had taken out with velocity about fifty yards of line; the leap terminated his first rush, and I had an opportunity to reel in about a fourth of the amount before he started off again. Meantime my man had hauled up the anchor, and we were in process of being towed by the big fish, whose frantic efforts to escape were making the reel revolve at a famous rate. From long experience with salmon, I knew enough to keep the point of my rod as high as possible consistent with the heavy strain; and the moment the rush diminished in intensity I clapped my finger onto the leather drag, and resisted stoutly, reeling in every inch of line that I could recover. But before long he was off once more in mad career, and out of water, viciously shaking his head in determined efforts to spit out the hook. His failure to do this after a series of endeavors showed that he had swallowed the bait, and that my chief concern now should be as to the strength of my tackle.

His first two rushes were the fiercest, and he did not at any time during the encounter carry out over one hundred and



Saw Fish on the Pier at St. James City.

fifty feet of line; but after checking him, while it was comparatively easy to hold him steady on a taut line, allowing him to tow us quietly along, I found serious difficulty in getting him nearer the boat. The result of bearing on him with the rod, or, in fishing parlance, giving him the butt, was to start him off in hot haste. I have since been informed that experienced tarpon fishermen force the fighting from start to finish, never allowing the victim to rest, but inducing him to exhaust himself by constant excursions. Moreover, they gain on him inch by inch by lowering the point of the

rod toward the water when the line is taut, and then raising it again with energy, reeling vigorously at the same time. Such a proceeding with a salmon would be apt to snap the gut casting-line, or break the tip; and I was afraid to indulge in it in this case, not knowing what my tackle would stand. Consequently, my progress in gaining ground on the monster was slow. Nevertheless, after half an hour I enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing him come to the top of the water, putting up his nose at first to blow, which is a custom with them, and at last showing his fin. Within a few minutes more he was fairly on the surface in some distress; and vigorous reeling on my part brought him within ten feet of the boat, where he lay rolling his huge tail from side to side, following the channel, and dragging us after him. At this time, one used to tarpon-fishing would probably have got him within reach of the gaff, and perhaps I should have succeeded in bringing him within reach of a long handled one; but unfortunately that which my man had with him was fastened to a very short handle. Straining as much as I dared, I could not force him to a spot where Pierce could get a fair thrust at him. His Sil-

very Highness evidently was alarmed by the boat, and avoided it as much as possible. At last Pierce, in desperation, struck at him, and missed him; and in a moment the line was flying out again, and the point of my rod was being dragged down as the tarpon plunged into the depths again, and by another glorious rush regained all that I had won. Then ensued a long up-hill fight, which I can compare only to a hand-to-hand tussle with a wild beast. Again and again did I get him up to within ten feet of the boat, and again and again would he thwart my efforts to draw him nearer. The thumb and forefinger of my right hand, where, owing to the shortness of the handle, they came in contact with the screws and side of the reel, were without skin, and bleeding profusely. I had not realized the importance of gloves or thumb-stalls, having always fished for salmon with bare hands. Had it not been for the leather drag, I could not have held him; and yet this, at the point where it was sewed to the bar of the reel, served to clog the line, owing to the lack of room for the line, when unevenly wound, to act freely; and only by reeling desperately hard could I wind at all the last ten yards. One should

take care to have on one's reel only so much line as will work entirely smoothly under the bars, making due allowance for the expansion caused by soaking. I tried to be very careful not to let my line become tangled, and to apportionate it evenly over the surface of the reel. I found it convenient to hold the line against the rod with my left thumb, while the fish was steady, as it relieved the pressure, shifting it to the drag when he began to run.

After the struggle had lasted about an hour and a half, I was appalled by my reel suddenly falling from my rod to the bottom of the boat. The rings which held it in place had slipped out of position. The same misadventure had twice happened to me while playing a salmon, so that I was not so much fluttered as if it had been a virgin experience; but I must confess that my heart sank within me. Having hastily picked up the reel, taking care not to twist the line, I told Pierce, who was standing behind me, to step aft and slip the rings into position after I had fitted it into the socket. Fortunately, the tarpon did not make one of his rushes during this ticklish proceeding, which was successfully accomplished.

My hands were now becoming very

cramped and weary, owing in a measure to the stiffness of my reel caused by the clogging of the line to which I have referred. The big fish seemed to have got his second wind; and though his rushes were less frequent, he showed a disposition to keep down in the deep water about thirty feet ahead of the boat. In the first two hours he jumped eight times, I should say, in addition to a series of five or six consecutive skips along the surface — a very pretty performance, and one which indicated that he was growing weaker. We had made three fruitless attempts to gaff him, each of which might have been successful had the gaff-handle been of proper length. It was curious to note how well the creature knew the channel; he pursued his winding way with admirable precision. My position was in the stern, on my knees, which were doubled under me, with the butt of my rod embedded between my thighs. My boatman sat at the oars in the middle of the boat, facing me, and his duty was to back water so as to keep the stern always toward the fish, in order to prevent him from pulling us sideways, and thus possibly upsetting us, or from getting under the boat. In my experience with this

fish, in contradistinction to the salmon, I observed that he always kept the line taut, and never ran directly toward the boat so as to double on us, as a salmon always does—which is one of the most interesting phases of that exciting sport. I have since been informed by others that my experience in this respect was not the normal one, and that a tarpon will often make a bee-line for his tormentor, even so far as to run under the boat. I am not, however, entirely convinced as to the truth of this.

After another quarter of an hour I had the creature on the surface once more, wallowing in manifest distress; and, having drawn him almost to a proper spot for gaffing, was induced by my own weariness to urge Pierce to try another thrust at him with the hook. This time he struck him, but the iron only slipped off the monster, who glided under the stern, giving, at the same moment, a swirl of his tail that drove an avalanche of water in my face and all over me. One beautiful scale lay before me on the thwart as a memorial of what had happened. I was just able to make sure that my line was not entangled, and then handed the rod for a moment to my guide, in order to re-

cover my dazed senses. This momentary respite was a great refreshment; and when I took the rod back again, I felt that I, in my turn, had got my second wind.

I was determined now to try more strenuous efforts; and I began to adopt the forcing process, of which I have written earlier, by means of which I was enabled to reel in more line, and compel my victim to approach nearer the boat. We had, however, another half-hour's earnest tussle before I could put him alongside the gunwale, where Pierce could have a deliberate blow at him. Before this moment arrived I had to undergo the disagreeable emotions resulting from getting my line wound once round his body, to free which required care and cautiousness on my part. It is necessary, when the fish is nearly exhausted, to be constantly on one's guard that the huge swinging tail does not come in contact with and cut the line, as it readily will do. As a final horror I discerned, when my line was becoming short, what looked like a large knot midway between the reel and the ring of my tip. I realized that if it were one, unless it would pass through the ring I should probably lose the fish, and I felt very apprehensive. It proved,

however, to be only a bit of dark green seaweed, which did not become an obstacle. A few moments later Pierce plunged his gaff into the water, and brought it up into the breast of the noble fighter.

"Sit still, sir," he said to me, anticipating, doubtless, my anxiety as to how he could get such a mammoth creature into the boat; then he canted the gunwale ever so little, and slipped the "Silver King" over it as neatly and easily as possible. The poor fish was nearly dead, and made but a single flap with his great tail. He was six feet long, and weighed one hundred and thirty-two pounds. It had been ten minutes of three when I hooked him, and it was now seven minutes of six, and he had towed us three miles. As he lay on our way home, and that evening at the wharf, with the moonlight resting upon him, he was by far the most beautiful specimen of the fish creation I have ever seen. As a tarpon had not been landed for ten days, some interest was occasioned at St. James City by his arrival; and the gentleman who had fished for three seasons without taking one said: "I do not wish to disparage your skill, but really you were very lucky." I quite agree with the gentleman; I certainly was.

Tarpon-fishing is, in my opinion, the most magnificent fishing-sport in the world. I understand that veterans at it now refuse to take up the anchor after hooking a fish, preferring to part company rather than not to bring him up to the boat by force of rod and reel only. As compared with salmon-fishing, the vast difference in the size of the two fish is a vital factor on the side of the "Silver King." Anglers with but slight experience have at least an even chance of saving a salmon, but what accomplished fisherman expects to land more than one tarpon in three? If a salmon were equal to a tarpon in weight, and still retained proportionately its activity, it might be a more formidable antagonist; but forty-pound salmon are rare, whereas one hundred and twenty pounds is not much more than the average weight of a tarpon, which shows the futility of such an argument. The manner of fighting is practically the same as regards running and leaping; the tarpon does not sulk, as the salmon is so fond of doing, nor, so far as my experience goes, does he double on the angler, which of course is an interesting trait in the salmon. Nor, indeed, are the surroundings of a tarpon fisherman to

be compared with the beautiful scenery and picturesque life on a Canadian salmon river. Bait is a dirty substitute for the trig fly, and the monotony of listless waiting palls on one accustomed to repeated casting. But, all the same, any one who has hooked and landed a tarpon can well afford to smile at the enthusiasm of any other fisherman in creation. Try it for yourself and see.

AMERICAN GAME-FISHES

By Leroy Milton Yale

A DEFINITION of "a game-fish" could hardly be made to suit all fishermen, or even all anglers. The essential idea is that the fish shall be caught for game or sport, and not for food or gain; and one may accept the opinion that game-fishing is "fishing of every kind requiring skill and carried on humanely and for enjoyment." Angling-books, from Walton and Venables to Francis and Norris, speak of the gudgeon or "sunny" as well as the trout, the eel as well as the salmon. If a more restricted definition be attempted,

each restrictor notes those characteristics of a game-fish which give him sport; and the result is rather an analysis of the peculiarities of the angler than of any definite group of fishes. Two very good essays at a definition, by Dr. Browne Goode, may be combined, and from them the following characteristics selected. A game-fish should have beauty, sapidity of flesh, and a certain degree of rarity, to excite the desire of the angler, as well as courage, strength, nimbleness, and cunning to test his skill in a contest rendered the more even by delicacy of tackle.

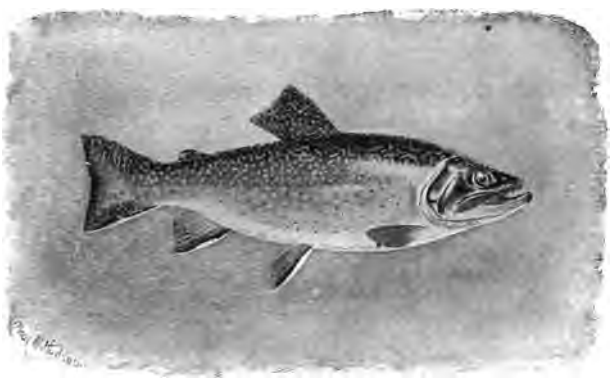
It so happens that game-fish do usually possess beauty of form or color, some far more than others, it is true; but sapidity of flesh is a more important quality, since no true angler seeks a fish that is not, at the least, good food; nor will he consent to the slaughter of any which is not dangerous to man or to better fish, unless there be a pretty sure prospect that it will find a welcome upon some table. Adherence to this rule sometimes cramps sport in remote regions where fish are large and abundant and human mouths few; but the self-denial is as nothing compared to the disgust at the waste of fine fish. However beautiful or sapid a fish may be, few would

continue to seek it for pleasure did it not avoid capture by its cunning, or resist it by its strength or activity. In fact, to many anglers, perhaps to most, this fighting capacity is the main characteristic of a game-fish, as it might be in a pugilist. That it is not the only one is shown by the contempt in which some hard-fighting but worthless fish are held. Whatever qualities be accepted as essential, certainly that fish which possesses the most of them, or in the greatest degree, will be entitled to the highest rank. Each angler will place his own estimate upon the relative value of individual qualities; but if we are ever called upon to settle a point of contested precedence, that fish, other things being equal, whose habitat is the most interesting, delightful, and sequestered, and whose capture involves the most refreshing exercise, shall be placed first.

All of the elements that go to make up this "gameness" in a fish vary greatly according to various circumstances, and none more than wariness and activity. The same fish may at one time be agile in the extreme, at another quite lethargic. But the change of mood as to shyness or cunning is even more striking. The shyness of the trout is proverbial; yet I have,

after a fruitless hour of fishing, had a trout dash more than once between my very knees at the lure dangling in the water, while I was adjusting my disarranged casting-line. Probably no fish better exemplifies this variation than the bluefish. At some seasons hunger or excitement seems to deprive them of all caution; and they will contend with insane eagerness for any lure — be it white rag, pine stick, or what not — which may be dragged after a sailing-boat. A week later, perhaps, the most appetizing morsels which the angler's ingenuity can devise tempt them in vain, if the water be clear enough for them to see the line. Every experienced angler for striped bass can tell remarkable tales of the cunning with which the bluefish seizes every piece of chum that is meant for his betters, but absolutely refuses to touch a baited hook unless he can first bite off the line. I have again and again had this fish — a synonym for senseless voracity — in plain view pick the bait piecemeal from my hooks. This increase in wariness greatly enhances the sport. Trolling or "drailing" for bluefish is an exhilarating frolic; but matching and outwitting their cunning with fine tackle is really game-fishing.

It is interesting in this connection to note how quickly wariness is born of experience. As it is developed in much fished waters, it might seem to be the result of observation or of individual suffering; but, in some cases at least, it evidently comes from information received. For instance, it is often noticed that if a fresh run of sea-trout is encountered, they may



Brook-trout.

be taken apparently without stint so long as none escape after hooking. If, however, one manage to free himself, the sport with that fly, and often for that day, is ended. His companions seem unalarmed by his struggle, but are warned by something learned from him after his escape. The same has been observed of other fish.

But the gameness of a fish, being measured by the sport his capture gives, may be modified by circumstances quite outside of the fish itself, — the angler's mood, his tackle, and many other things. The salmon fisher, for instance, may to-day abhor the splendid sea-trout as "vermin," not from any affectation, not even from the spirit of purism which led to the colored brother's contemptuous rejection of the fine pike because he was "a-catting," but because it has interfered with the pursuit of the salmon, or has been found in the pools or on the spawning-ground of the nobler fish, where it may do great damage. To-morrow, properly equipped, he will gladly go to meet the trout at the head of the tide.

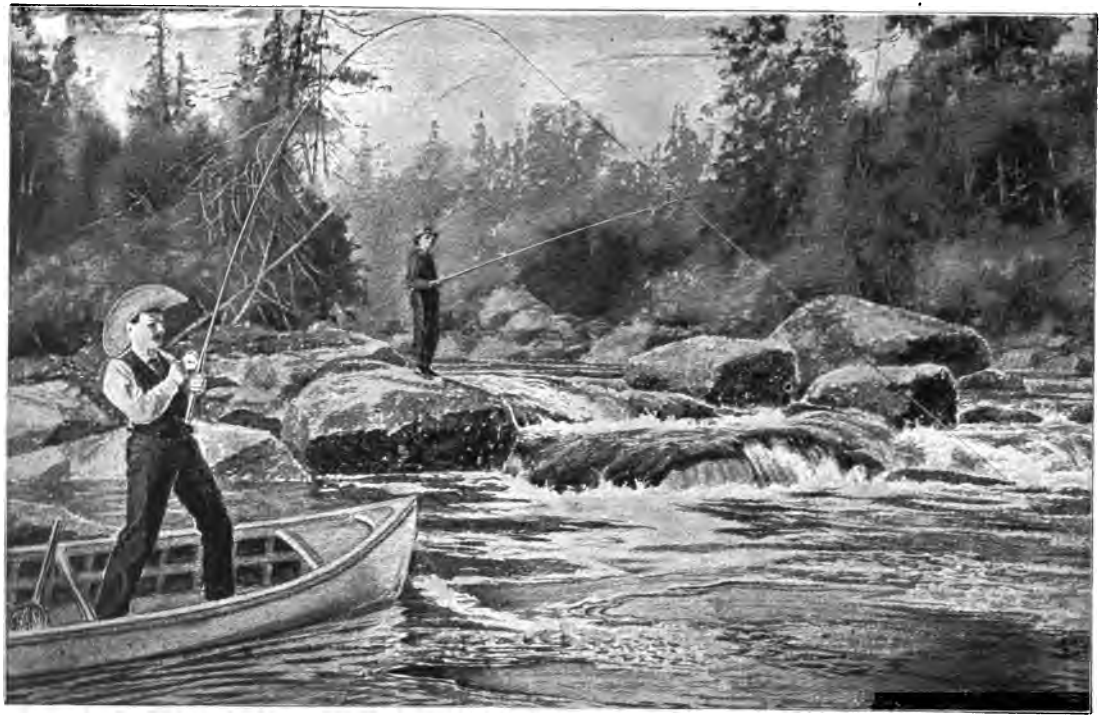
The possibility of getting sport from a fish is especially dependent upon the method of fishing. If one anchors his boat in ten fathoms of water, and sinks his stout hand-line with a lead as heavy as any fish he may reasonably expect to take, he will not much value the gameness of the prey he hales from the depths. But if he study the habits of that fish, and search for his hiding-places in the rocky tideways, or his feeding-places on the shallows, and "angle unto him" with

light tackle, suitable to his weight, he is changed from an acquaintance of low estate into a respected and admired antagonist. And it may in general be asserted that any fish is most game when fished for in that way which gives it the greatest chance of resistance and of escape, and which demands the greatest skill and delicacy on the part of the fisherman. Deep fishing, whether bottom fishing or deep trolling, demands heavy tackle, if only to carry the necessary weight of lead. Save for the largest fish, such tackle at once destroys any chance of finesse. The fish being well hooked, any force which will not mutilate it enough to loosen the hook may be employed. For such fishing the rod has little advantage over the hand-line, as only the stoutest rods can stand the strain.

In shallow water, or where fish are sought not far from the surface, more or less delicacy of apparatus is practicable; and it would be hard to find a better standard of the gameness of a fish (i.e., its sport-giving power) than the degree of delicacy that is permitted, and of skill demanded, in its capture. Yet not until rods are constructed to register ergs or foot-pounds will anglers agree as to the rela-

tive fighting ability of their favorites, and discussions thereof are generally futile. Doubtless it is the element of delicacy which has given fly-fishing its pre-eminence in the estimation of anglers. No greater skill is demanded to excel with the fly than in minnow-casting, or in casting the worm in "North Country" style; but with the delicate rod and tackle called for by fly-casting the angler derives more pleasure, or at least more kinds of pleasure, than in any other way. And it is for similar reasons, no doubt, that those fish which are known as reliable risers, at least in certain seasons, are those by which most store is set.

Locality, opportunity, and personal predilection make specialists of anglers. In our great country one who does not make an occupation of his pastime can practically know but a few of the enormous number of fine fishes in its fresh waters, or along its shores. The limits of a magazine article will admit only a part of those which have given the writer pleasure in his occasional holidays. Some of these occupy, by common consent of anglers, places of honor; others are less known or more slightly esteemed; but since they are, if properly fished for, truly



Trout Fishing — a Strike

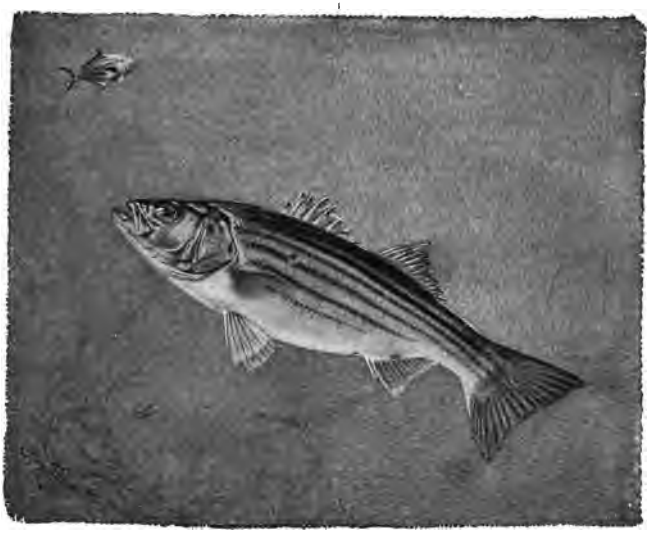
game-fish, they are recommended to the sincere "brother of the angle" who cannot command the time required to enjoy the pursuit of those more vaunted.

"For by cause," says Dame Juliana, "that the Samon is the moost stately fyssh that ony maye angle to in freshe water, Therefore I purpose to begyn at hym." Stately indeed he is, and all that attends his capture has something of state about it. His beauty triumphs over the adverse surroundings of the fishmongers' slab. Look at a bright spring fish, note his graceful rounded lines, his small head, his gleaming sides, with almost imperceptible scales, and with here and there a black X worn as jauntily as the patches of an old-time belle. Imagine him living, strong, agile, and alert, and you cannot wonder that the acclamation of anglers declares him king of sporting fishes.

The Atlantic has but one salmon, the *Salmo salar;* the Pacific coast of our country has at least five, all belonging to the genus *Oncorhyncus.* The salmon of commerce comes from that coast; several species, especially the Quinnat, or King, Salmon, being taken in enormous numbers to meet the world's demand. Some of these kinds are equal as food, under the

same circumstances, to the Atlantic fish, and probably would be his peer as a game-fish if they could be persuaded to rise to a fly. As it is, they generally are trolled for in bays and estuaries with hand-lines and tackle so robust that even their gallant fight can avail little. Such noble fish deserve fairer handling. The supply has seemed inexhaustible, but the unrestrained destructiveness of nets and wheels is beginning to tell. The experience of the Eastern States and still older countries ought easily to show our quick-witted Western brethren where the trouble lies, and where the cure is found.

Let us go back to our Eastern fish and our Eastern rivers. Probably the yield of a season would be counted a poor day's haul on the Columbia, but the taking of each fish is an event. Long before the snow-water on his gills wakened in the fish the recollections of his native stream the angler had made his plans for the encounter, and arranged the details of his preparations with loving care. At length he is upon the river. That alone would be an experience worth the pains, but for the haunting expectation of that salmon's rise. Out of the forest on the flanks of the low mountains comes the stream



Pompano and Striped Bass.

twined of the threads of countless brooks. Over falls and through chasms, of which the gaffers, who are loggers in winter, will tell by the evening fire, it finds its way to the broad pool beside which he has set his camp. Behind the camp, a little way up, is a cool spring among the rocks; higher yet on the sides of the cliff are spruces, cedars, birches, maples, and all the multitudinous foliage of early summer. Across the pool the rocky wall rises nearly perpendicularly to its crest of trees. The bed of the stream, too, is of rock broken into steps, with patches of gravel where, through

the uneven water, he is able to make out the resting-place of a fish quite disproportioned to the shallow, clear stream. His soundest leader and his most taking fly are put out. He watches its curving journey down the pool. Foot by foot he lengthens the cast, until he knows the fish has seen the lure. One after another he offers the most enticing wares of Kelso or of Sprouston, and adds thereto bizarre creations of his own without effect. The fish has run the gantlet of scores of pools, and knows the contents of the fly-book as well as its owner. The angler's arm, soft from the winter's disuse, begins to tire. The fly falls with less grace, and sidles down the water as if it were as discouraged as he; when around it what a swirl, as half a bronze-black head shows for an instant above the surface! What wonder that many a novice is paralyzed by stage-fright. It is well if his gaffer sets up his rod in time, and brings him to his senses. He will need them all.

The struggle need not be told, — the runs, the retrieval of the line, the leaps and sulks, and all the devices of the excited fish; nor yet the counter-manœuvres of the angler and his surprising rushes with rod high in air over places through which

a little before he painfully clambered with the gaffer's aid. It is an experience the angler never forgets, but to another it has little meaning.

The trout of Europe, the trout of Walton, does not exist in our country, save in a few places, mostly preserves, where it has recently been introduced. But when our English forefathers came to New England they found a fish which so resembled it — although more beautiful — that they called it the brook-trout; and brook-trout it ever will remain, although the strictness of science says it is no trout, but a char. But, as Jordan remarked, "Nothing higher can be said of a salmonoid than that it is a char!" The determining distinction lies in the formation of one of the bones of the head, and would escape any one but an anatomist. There are in our country, however, real trout. Such is the Rocky Mountain, or red-throated trout (*Salmo mykiss*), a good fish, and much more worthy of introduction into new waters than the rainbow trout (*S. irideus*), which a few years back was quite extensively placed in Eastern streams and lakes. The latter is not the peer of our own fish.

What a lovely creature is this brook-trout! Stouter than most chars, he is still

lithe and very muscular. The water and the soil about him vary his color, but in the dullest mill-pond he is not ugly. In bright, cold water with clean bottom, how he gleams, be he the fingerling of a romantic stream in his first nuptial garment or the six-pounder of a Nepigon reach. From his olive back, vermiculated like the damascening of an old sword-blade, and his spotted side, to his ruddy belly, and fins barred with black and gold, he is a beauty. Beautiful, too, are all his haunts. In mountains and in lowlands, in rushing rivers and in quiet lakes, where the springs gush out beneath the roots of the evergreens, or where the salt tide forces back the flowing streams, he is ever the same lover of clear, cold water. Not even hunger will take him where it is foul or warm. It has been my good fortune to know this lovely fish in many brooks and streams and in larger waters, from the Bay of Heats and the Saguenay to that great river whose rapids were Niagara's training-school; and everywhere he has led me to pictures of abiding beauty. But in memory none is lovelier than the streams where I first fished, and which I still visit. Come to one of them.

In the springy meadows of the uplands,

Gaffing a Striped Bass

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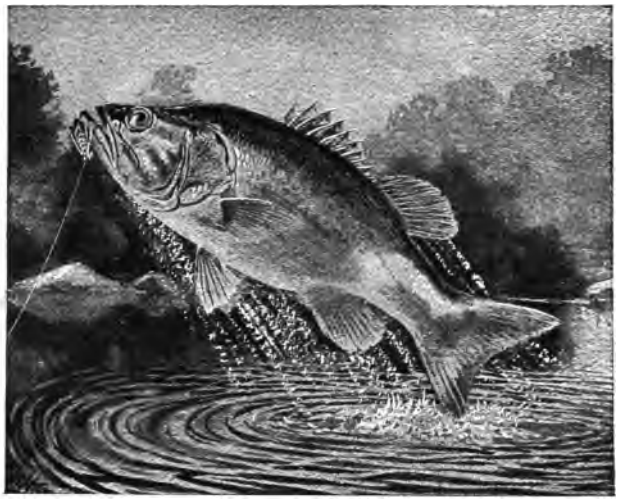
between the sparsely wooded hills, are its well-heads, where the darting fry heed not the drinking cattle. Their joining runnels make a brooklet, and when its sister joins it from the northward already there is water worthy of fishing. Better leave it. Here are small fish trying their strength. If you startle a good one she is here on an errand which shall increase your sport by and by. We will leave the road where it crosses the brook the second time, and enter a wonderful shade of oak and beech and maple. This brook would give Meander a sense of rectitude. Amid bowlders, beech-roots, and boles, mossy and dappled, making little promontories covered with bracken, maidenhair, and shade-loving plants, it winds about with a tiny pool and rapid at every rod. There is no room for a cast here, but there is fascinating fishing if you dape your fly, or let a worm whirl in the eddies. Ah, that one is not full eight inches! Put him back, and come down to an exquisite deep pool which has eaten itself out of the high bank from which the maple hangs. Go to the bottom of the pool on the farther side, where the bank is low, and you will have a short cast up stream over a good fish. A little below is a pond full of fish, but not

large ones. Pass it: the stream below is better. Its right bank is wooded; but on the other you may come to it across the meadow, and screen yourself behind tall grasses, clethras, azaleas, and other brook-side things. One fish picked up here gives more pleasure than a dozen from the swampy pond. There is one pool below (still with its steep side and its meadow side, for the stream has clung to the curve of the low hill) which I should like to fish myself, for old time's sake. In the pond below you will find abundant good fish. Take what you will, and then I'll show you the way home.

One dislikes to pass by the grayling, "the lady of the streams;" but in our country its habitat is relatively so restricted that it must remain, even to most anglers, a book or aquarium acquaintance. Its repute as a game-fish varies greatly. But it should be borne in mind that those who know it best hold it highest; and it seems altogether probable that the slight esteem of others is due to their having fished for the grayling in summer. It is in full season only in autumn, after the holiday time for most busy men is over. Whatever may be thought of its fighting qualities, there is no dispute about its beauty. Its



Large mouthed, or Oswego, Black Bass.

dark back is olive-brown or purple-black, its sides are purple and silver, glinting like nacre as it turns in the light, which makes its spots now black, now purple.

These are the *noblesse* of game-fishes, and they are game for the few as well. They multiply and grow, in fresh water at least, so slowly that unprotected they soon disappear from thickly settled regions. To seek them in their remote and sequestered homes demands an expenditure of time and money proper only to the relatively few. The personal preservation of fishing-waters jars a little our democratic notions; but without such care the game cannot

exist. It is no question of sport for the many or for the few, but of sport for the few or for none. Fish-preserves do not (as has been charged against great game-preserves) hinder any man's successful bread-winning. They simply demand that the flow of water be free and unpolluted; and that the owner have the same right to the fish he raises that his neighbor has to his poultry.

With the disappearance of the trout, and perhaps because of it, the black bass (or rather the black basses, for there are two of them) has become the most generally popular of our fresh-water game-fish. For ourselves, we cannot put it beside the game salmonoids; but these being *hors concours*, it (meaning the small-mouth species) is all in all better than any fish of its weight found in fresh water. Its habitat is naturally wide, extending — both species included — through the basin of the Great Lakes and the upper part of the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi Basin and the South Atlantic States, including the Florida peninsula. East of the Appalachian chain, down to and including the Potomac, they seem to have come only by man's help. The earlier anglers of the Eastern States did not know the fish; but throughout that

immense region which goes by Central time, it has been a favorite since its settlement, and has become such where introduced. It has been sometimes put into waters from which it would more wisely have been excluded; but, on the other hand, it has made good fishing-grounds of many a sheet of water which before scarcely yielded a day's sport. While it does best with good spring water, if there be but food enough it will thrive and grow rapidly under conditions which would be fatal to such a fish as a trout. Hence bass of a pound weight are probably as easily found as is a trout of one-fourth of that. Many things contribute to the survival and growth of the bass. In the first place, the parent is not, like many anadromous or late-spawning fish, driven away by winter from its ova before they are hatched. The nest is fiercely guarded as long as the young stay in it. Then, as cold weather approaches, it hibernates in the mud or some safe place where the winter poacher cannot find it. When active it has a voracity equal to a pike's, and is even better able to gratify it. Naturally, then, where it is found at all it is usually reasonably abundant and of good size. Remarkable strength is evident from its heavy build,

but the secret of its agility must be hidden within its brain. In mild climates it spawns rather early in the season, and is looking for food at the time when the "average citizen" is taking his holiday. These qualities are enough to secure popularity.

The two species of black bass have had many scientific names, and a good score at least of popular ones, the most generally used being "small-mouthed bass" for *Micropterus dolomei*, and "large-mouthed bass," or "Oswego bass," for *M. salmoides*. The former is generally considered by anglers to be much the better fighter. Dr. Henshall, who speaks with authority founded on special study and large experience, claims that, weight, water, and surroundings being the same, the fish are equal in strength and method of resistance. We may leave this point open, and say simply that the black bass is a very game fish indeed. He fights very hard and fights long. He tries various tactics, leaping high and frequently shaking his head in the air, as if to dislodge the hook, suddenly boring down, darting from side to side, "jigging," and taking advantage of any rock or sunken log about which he may tangle and break the line. His vitality is such that he sur-

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A Striped Bass Fisherman's Stand

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vives capture a long time, and even the merciful blow upon the base of the skull sometimes is not sufficient to make him "stay killed."

The bass is taken in all sorts of ways, and with a great variety of lures. Still-fishing, trolling, minnow-casting, and fly-casting are all employed. The still-fisher's outfit is generally the most ample, as the bass is noted among fish for the catholicity and variability of his taste — minnows, shrimps, crickets, grasshoppers, helgramites, dew-worms, and what not. Pretty certainly, if the angler has depended upon a professional fisherman for his bait, he will find himself overstocked with what the fish were taking day before yesterday, and scantily supplied with what they wish to-day. Even with all the baits known to the fisherman, he may fail to find the fish in his favorite places — a fact which has led some to suppose that they make circuits of the sheet of water they inhabit, staying but a short time in one place. It is possible to fish a well-stocked pond often without finding the fish at all. Minnow-casting and fly-fishing are, after all, much the more satisfactory methods of fishing. They have much the same kind of interest: by them both a great deal of water

can be investigated without unreasonable delay or labor, and the situation of the fish ascertained if they be in the humor for either lure. Fly-fishing for bass has nothing peculiar in it, save that the flies used are usually large and showy, and the rod, line, and gut proportionably heavier than for trout-fishing. The fly is ordinarily used with success only in moderately shallow water, and perhaps the same might be said of minnow-casting; and in using them early in the season, it is wise always to make sure that the places where rises are frequent are not the resting-place of some belated spawners. The fly will have done no real harm if you put the fish back, but the minnow-hook may have done irreparable damage. In case of doubt, it is better to sheer off into deeper water, and come again later in the season.

The pike family, which in Europe contains a single species (*Lucius lucius*), is represented in our own country by at least five, of which three are commonly considered game-fish; namely, the common green pickerel of the Eastern and Middle States (*L. reticulatus*); the pike, the same as the European fish; and the maskinongy, meaning, in Algonquin, great pike (*L. masquinongy*), which is found chiefly in

the basin of the Great Lakes, and is the finest fish of the group. The maskinongy is often cautious, and not easy to entice; and after hooking, its weight, strength, and alertness make it a worthy antagonist. In waters about the Thousand Islands it is considered a prize. The pike, if large, often gives nearly as good sport, especially if for the sake of plunder it has left its favorite lakes or slack water, and dwells a while in a rapid current of cold water. But, on the whole, I have not found it a very interesting fish. It sometimes makes one or two good runs soon after hooking, and, failing to break away, then comes home. Its admirers speak of it as game to the last, but I have not seen this peculiarity. It surpasses all other fish in one thing,—the number of incredible tales of which it is the subject. At the beginning of the Christian era, the manufacture of the legend of the mighty and voracious pike was well established. The industry is still continued, thrives without protection, and no trust as yet restricts its output.

Nor is the common pickerel a fish to excite much enthusiasm. Yet in ponds and streams not stocked with better fish, it is an object of consideration. In cold,

clear streams, and in lakes after the autumn chill has settled upon them, it loses its muddy flavor, and becomes an acceptable table-fish. Even when the lakes are frozen, it gives sport to those who like to use the spear, or to skate from one "tip-up" to another. But when the trout is out of season, and the bass is in the mud, the pickerel still gives a few days of real angling before the rods are put away for the winter. Best of all, to our taste, is it to seek him in the lake shallows, or in the still reaches of the streams, when the autumn haze tempers the glory of the leaves, when the white frost makes the bents crisp under foot, and our pockets shall be heavy with hickory-nuts, even if our creels be light. There is another fish, sometimes called pike or pickerel (and salmon, too, for that matter), which is no pike. It is the wall-eye, or pike perch. It is interesting ichthyologically; it is an excellent table-fish when fresh, and, if caught in quick water (I have known it only in the Nepigon and the Grande Décharge), a good fighter.

The delights of angling are by no means, in our country, bound up with the capture of a few kinds of fish. It is one of the evidences of the enormous re-

sources of our anglers that so many kinds, the taking of which would in England (the country *par excellence* of angling literature) be considered well worth describing, are here airily waved aside as "boys' fish." If such they be, there is a good deal of boy left in some veteran anglers. The chubs and their kindred, the race of sunfishes and all the lesser basses, and even the yellow perch (good risers at the fly all, in their season), have been thus slightingly characterized.

Now, take this perch, for instance. He is dear to the boy's heart because of his gregariousness and his courage. If he be found at all, he is usually found abundantly; and, unless age or hard experience have cooled his ardor, he is not alarmed at the disappearance of his comrades, but follows the caught one to the last, and is ready to try his luck on the next bait. But large perch are not so easily taken. It requires fine tackle to deceive them and sound tackle to hold them; and fish of three-quarters of a pound or more, or even of half a pound, give excellent sport, and there are few better table-fish taken from fresh water. Not the least of its excellences, to the angler's mind, is the fact that it can be caught late in the season,

generally as late as it is comfortable to sit in a punt.

Sea-fishing attracts or repels according as the charms or discomforts of the sea the more impress the fisherman. The drawbacks of deep-water angling have been mentioned, but there is ample field for angling in salt water without these. Shore-fishing is often exceedingly satisfactory if one but have the skill to make a fairly long cast; while estuary- and harbor-fishing have much the same charms as lake-fishing, with the great abundance of game which the sea affords. Around New York the opportunities that salt water affords for skilful and delicate angling are widely appreciated, and the advantages gained both as to sport and to success by the use of fine tackle are more and more recognized. Among the delights of salt-water angling is the variety of fish that may be taken, even in a single day's sport. It is impossible to even enumerate those ordinarily sought for. Those denizens of the two oceans and the Gulf familiar to the readers of angling journals must number a hundred or more species. Quite a large number of them, not generally recognized as anadromous, push their way, in search of food or for other reasons, into brackish or

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Trolling for Blue Fish

even into fresh water, affording the angler some of his choicest opportunities. At a single point, about forty miles up the Hudson, the writer has taken the striped bass, the bluefish, the weakfish, the hickory shad, and the Lafayette, — all sea-fish, — amid scenery as beautiful as that of a Highland loch. Even the enormous tarpon, which may outweigh his captor, is sought for in shallow harbors or estuaries.

The capture of the Striped Bass, however, is most satisfactory, as the "setting" seems most appropriate, — in the breakers or in the rocky tideways of the coast. Whether or not the tarpon shall yet oust him from his place, the bass has hitherto been *facile princeps* among the game-fish of salt water. The admirers of "the salmon of the surf" have even challenged the supremacy of the river king. Beautiful, strong, active, and cunning, his taking is a triumph to the angler and a gratification to the gourmand. There are few more beautiful fish than a bass. His colors are more brilliant before he reaches the grandest size; and fish of medium weight — ten to thirty pounds — are generally thought to be the most active. But the same is true of most fish. There is one particular about the fight of the bass

which is never forgotten, the straight-away rush after it feels the hook. As he sees score after score of yards of line disappear from the reel in spite of all the pressure of thumb that the rod will bear, the anxiety of the angler is intense. Sometimes the fish is turned (or rather he changes his mind) only when the despairing fisherman thinks he can count the remaining turns on the 200-yard spool — and sometimes he does not change his mind at all. It is rather remarkable that right within the limits of New York City has been the school, if one may so say, of bass-angling. Hell Gate, with its ledges and eddies, was an ideal place for the fish; and the founders of the great bass-clubs were largely trained there. Of late years the constant passing of steam and sailing craft, the pollution of the waters by the sewage of a metropolis, not to mention the senseless and lawless taking of tiny fish, have impaired the fishing, so that fish of above five pounds are rarities; yet in one week during the last summer, after a hard blow, the East River trollers took a number of larger fish. The surf fisherman fishes from the shore, making long casts — fifty yards or more — from the reel, or throwing the hand-line with the skill born of practice.

The platform "stand," so much in vogue at fishing-clubs, we cannot help thinking a mistake. To give so wary a fish the opportunity to silhouette the fisherman against the sky cannot be conducive to success. A shorter cast from a less conspicuous position, we believe, would take more fish. In shallow water, rivers, estuaries, and the like, the bass will take the fly; and the method is well worth the trial.

There is an humble kinsman of the bass which has been one of our life-long friends, a game-fish of far more merit than many a higher praised one, — the white perch (*Morone americana*). When young he is the victim of his appetite, and falls the prey of any fisherman with any tackle; but as he becomes of ripe age he is shy enough. Large ones often are taken by the ambushed angler on the lightest of fly-tackle, when the bait-fisher had abandoned the water as hopeless. Here is the memorandum of an afternoon's fishing in early June of last year:

Let us row up the creek as far as we can. The ebb is well spent, and it is hard to keep the skiff afloat; so we land and haul her up, taking the shrimp-seine. A few sweeps in a favorable place give us

bait enough. Upon the finest of drawn-gut leaders we put a couple of dark midge-flies, and as a stretcher a small hook of fine wire (No. 6 Aberdeen is about right). Bait this with the smallest of shrimps; for the herrings are still running, and are likely to be along with the perch. Your fresh-run herring is dainty; no coarse tackle nor large baits for him. A strong southwest wind has blown off the hot mists of the morning, the sky is clear with snowy cumuli, and the sun bright; but we need not, after all, throw off our coats. The broad meadow is encircled with rich-colored oaks of small size, and on one side the pasture-land slopes up above them. Through the green the creek wanders, as if determined to stay within it as long as possible. Here and there a straight branch shows that at some time man has tried his hand at topography, and sends us a long way around.

Not too near the bank, now. Or, if you cannot cast up against the wind so far, crawl up and cast kneeling. Not here to-day! These little migrations are among the charms of this fishing. Many usual haunts may be tried fruitlessly before the fish are found, but if found they are likely to be in force; they are social creatures.

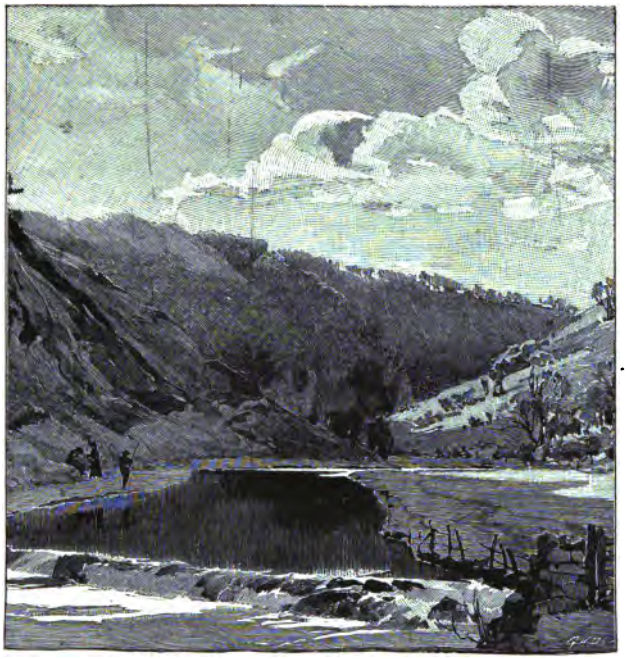
Ah, we have found them! There is a good perch at the shrimp. How he makes the dropper dance! And now a herring has that, and is out of water in an instant, showing his broad silvery side, and then, making this same breadth serve him, he sways and surges at the leader like a boy's kite in a flawy sou'wester. For a few minutes they take freely, and then are gone; and we go too, meeting them or others again and again at the bends and the reaches. Now the creel is full enough, and the westering sun suggests that we are waited for at home. We cut across a large bow of the creek, looking to find something more dainty to offer than the contents of the creel. Here it is,—the sweet-scented arethusa. How abundant it is! Around this rosy centre we put a few blooms of the great blue iris and buttercups. That will suffice. Well! This is an odd place for the checkerberry, but here it is, out in the meadows by the salty creek; red berries and ruddy young leaves ("drunkards" the children call them), hot to look at, hotter yet to taste.

So along to the place where we hid the net beside the dike, and then to the skiff. She floats free with the risen tide. When we shoot the bridge, down flat and save

your head! That's safely done. Here's the eddy where we used to take the scuppaug with trout tackle. Do you remember that twilight? They will be there again at the end of the summer, as game and as toothsome as ever. What a pity to inflict the indignity of a hand-line on the brave little fighters! Now for home and supper.

IZAAK WALTON

By Alexander Cargill



Entrance to Dovedale, Looking up the Valley.

"Sir, when I go a-fishing, an' the Fates decree that I get no fish, then am I still a gainer; for, God's body! I get flesh!"

THERE is a peculiar irony in the fact that a man who himself succeeded in recording, with satisfying amplitude of detail, the lives of no fewer than five of his contemporaries, should have left so little record of his own career, that nearly fifty years of it might be ade-

quately epitomized in half as many lines. Yet such is the case with Izaak Walton, the patron saint of the great confraternity of anglers, who was born into the world a little over three hundred years ago, whose fame is as fresh as ever, yet of the greater part of whose life we know almost nothing. To most students of literary biography, and especially to the followers of that prince of anglers and good fellows, genuine interest in the man and his deeds only begins with the period of his retirement from active life. Indeed, it is no discourtesy to his memory to go further than this, and say (for Walton loved the truth more than sunshine) that, in its permanent value to posterity, the life of the author of *The Complete Angler* began only with his sixtieth year, and when that famous work was first sent forth to the world.

The tantalizing paucity of facts as to a character that must have been most interesting, — a character of whom it has been said that he possessed all the virtues of a typical squire, unblemished even by the shadow of a vice, is almost as notable as in the case of the greatest life of all, with its quiet beginning at Stratford-on-Avon, not a hundred miles from Stafford, where Walton was born. Stratford and

Stafford! great indeed is the glory that belongs to these two fair midland towns. If one is the birthplace of the king of English poets and dramatists, in the other the patron saint of all true anglers first beheld the light of day stream down from the many-tinted, ever-changing English sky, under whose canopy he, as boy, youth, and man, delighted so much to wander at his own sweet will, in all seasons, with his honest heart as full of love to God and man as was the old-fashioned pannier on his back brimful of trouts from the Lea or Dove!

As with Shakespeare, so with Walton; tradition has ventured to fill up the spaces which an unregarding destiny had left void. Her finger has pointed to the house and street — even to the very room — in Stafford town where Walton was born; and we can only believe or discredit according to our measure of faith. Happily, there is no doubt whatever respecting that event itself, which took place somewhere within the Parish of St. Mary's on Aug. 9th, 1593. The register of the church of that name states that: —

> "September 1593: Baptiz fuit Isaac Filius Jervis Walton, XX° die mensis et anni prædict."

Ancient Houses in Fleet Street, including the Residence of Izaak Walton, 1620.

Very little is known respecting his parents. What profession or status his father, the aforesaid Jervis or Jervaise Walton, held, no record exists to show. From the fact, however, that he "took to wife" a lady who was a descendant of Archbishop Cranmer, of Reformation fame, it is believed that he belonged to a goodly English stock, and occupied an honorable

social position; so that in respect to his parentage, at all events, Izaak Walton may be held to have been fortunate. "Not a vestige of the place or manner of his education has been discovered." Walton senior died when Izaak was but two years old. From his mother Walton probably inherited his strong attachment to the Church of England and his Royalist predilections; and it is only gallant to suppose that he derived from her also that gentleness and nobility of disposition which, as his writings abundantly testify, formed so pronounced a trait in his character. To his father he may have been indebted for the foundation of that physical strength and endurance by which his life was prolonged to its ninetieth year. Walton's own temperate living, and his long-continued open-air habits, no doubt helped very materially to his attaining such an old age. But what he owed to his parents for his moral and physical endowments he has himself acknowledged, though perhaps indirectly, in more than one reference in his works.

Whatever the unrecorded story of Walton's boyhood and youth (imagination might freely and delightedly fill in the details!), it is quite certain that he was in

London seeking fame and fortune some time about his thirtieth year. There he established himself in business as a linen-draper, or sempster, a lucrative business even in these days. His "establishment" at first was situated in the upper story of the Royal Exchange, or Bourse, on Cornhill, erected by Sir Thomas Gresham, and consisted of a small compartment, "seven feet and a half long and five wide; an economy," according to Sir John Hawkins, one of Walton's earliest biographers, "that would scarcely allow him to have elbow-room. Yet here did he carry on his trade till some time before the year 1624, when he dwelt on the north side of Fleet Street, in a house two doors west of the end of Chancery Lane. It further appears that the place was in the joint occupation of Izaak Walton and John Mason, hosier, from whence we may conclude that half-a-shop was sufficient for the business of Walton." This conclusion has, however, been dissented from by later biographers, who incline to the opinion that the "half-shop" was merely an office, while the business itself was carried on elsewhere.

In December, 1626, when in his thirty-third year, Walton married his first wife, a Miss Rachel Floud or Flood or Floyd,

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Portrait of Izaak Walton

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by whom he had seven children. No incident of his married life with this lady is anywhere recorded; but that he had much sorrow to put to the test his natural sweetness and cheerfulness may be gathered from the fact that he not only lost all the offspring of this marriage, but at the end of fourteen years had likewise to mourn her death. Childless and a widower, Walton was now in his forty-seventh year; and it was probably to direct his mind away from his domestic afflictions that he essayed to publish the first of his famous lives, viz., that of Dr. John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, along with a collection of the sermons of that well-known divine and poet. Three years later, though only arrived at what many regard as the meridian of life and effort, Walton relinquished business, and, with a fair competency, acquired, we may rest assured, honestly and diligently, left London to reside near Stafford, his native place.

During the period of his London life, Walton must have fore-gathered with not a few notable and worthy men. He appears to have had a special genius for forming friendships with men of really high and representative character. The attraction was perhaps as much on his side; and

indeed we are told by one chronicler (Dr. Zouche) that "such were his manners and deportment, that he classed among his friends the first and most illustrious of his contemporaries." Nor was Walton less fortunate in his social connections. The times in which he lived were times of gloomy suspicion, of danger and distress, when a severe scrutiny into the public and private behavior of men established a rigid discrimination of character. Walton's life and conduct were, of course, exempt from the slightest hint of distrust, and untouched by the merest breath of suspicion. His worldly prudence was but on a par with his devout piety and austere simplicity; and he joyed and jogged along the foot-path ways of life,— if, haply, now and then with a grave and thoughtful brow at the aspect of affairs around him, generally with a mind at peace with itself, and with a heart buoyant with sincere love towards God and to man, and to all creatures and things whatsoever of good report. He must therefore be allowed to have possessed a peculiar excellence of disposition. The singular circumspection which he observed in the choice of his acquaintances has not escaped the notice of Mr. Cotton, who says: "My father Walton will be

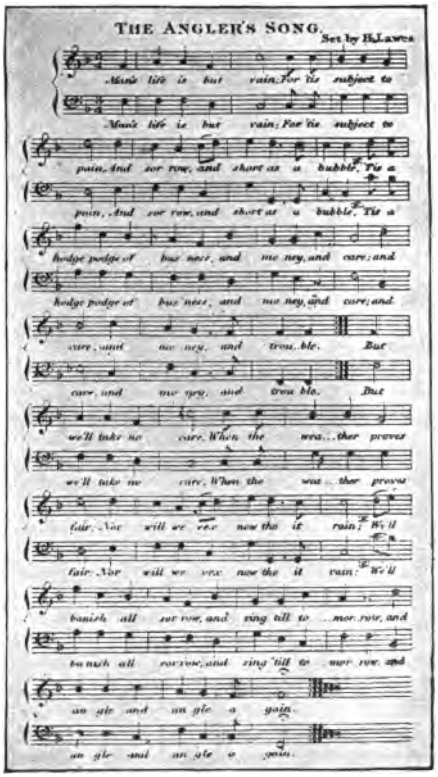
The Izaak Walton Inn at the entrance to Dovedale.

seen twice in no man's company he does not like, and likes none but such as he believes to be very honest men; which is one of the best arguments, or at least of the best testimonies I have, that I either am, or that he thinks me, one of those, seeing that I have not yet found him weary of me;" a testimony otherwise amply confirmed and referred to later on.

While, on the one hand, there are these credible data respecting Walton's successful career in London, to the angler, who is eager to know something, outside of tradition and beyond mere surmise, of the

master's doings by his beloved Lea, whither he often repaired in the intervals of business, history is, on the other hand, most illiberal. We can only believe that he pursued his favorite pastime with all diligence; for he acquired that expertness in it which subsequently made him so famous. His proximity to the Thames and its upper waters afforded to a man with such ardor for fishing all the opportunities essential for becoming a successful sportsman and reliable guide. In those days, as indeed to some extent even yet, the higher Thames and the many feeders of that royal river — notably the Lea at Wareham, some twenty miles from London, which claimed the particular patronage of Walton — formed the chief resort of anglers from the metropolis. And when we reflect on the fact that most of the wayfaring then had to be done on foot, the knights of the gentle art, with their varied and oftentimes burdensome paraphernalia, must have been, to tramp that distance, liberally endowed with patience and endurance. These qualities at least were conspicuous in Walton, and, in all probability, more highly developed in him during his meanderings between Fleet Street and the Lea than at any other time. The grow-

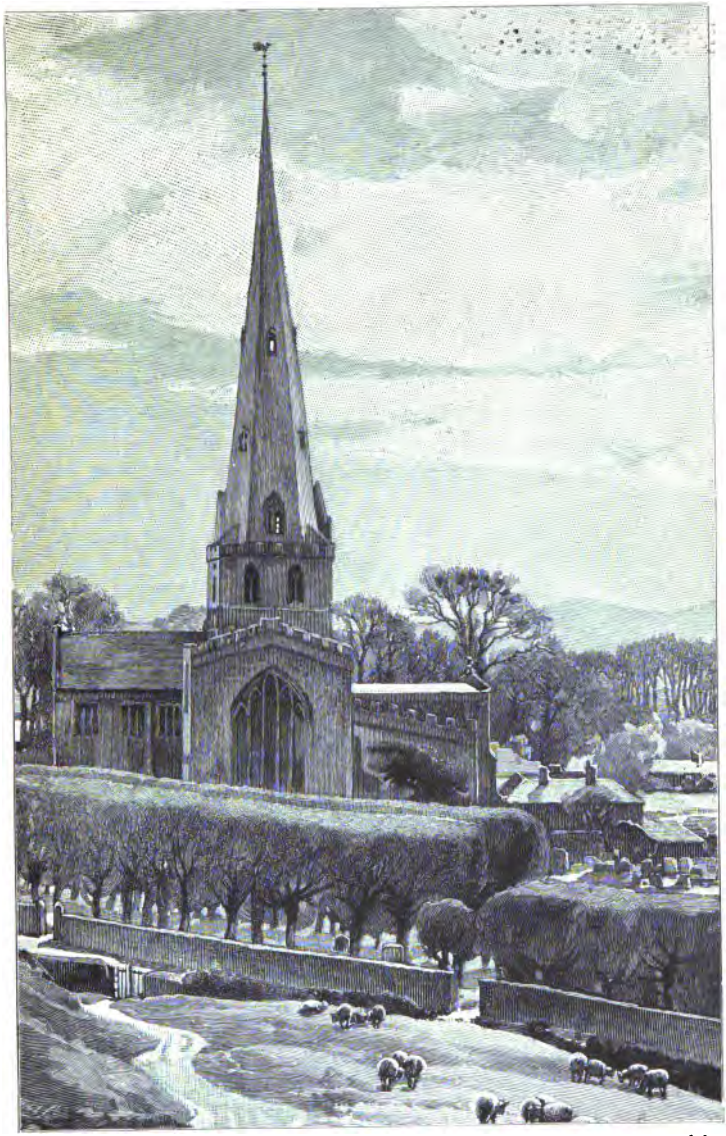
ing inspiration of *The Complete Angler* was no doubt, often present within him on those days of travel; but it was only after the close of his London career and his retiring from active life that we may suppose its idea actually to have developed. "I confess," he says, in the opening pages of the work, "my discourse" (as he calls it) "is like to prove suitable to my *recreation, calm* and *quiet*," — blessings more likely to be found in the green lanes of Staffordshire than anywhere else. The neighborhood of his native town was not only admirably adapted for pro-



The Angler's Song, with the Original Music.

viding suitable calm and quiet in the preparation of his "discourse," but afforded the very best opportunities for the practise of the art on which he now began to descant. Within a limit of twenty-five or thirty miles of Stafford, he had the choice of at least half a dozen first-rate streams in which to practise. There were, for instance, the Soar, the Tame, the Sow, the Idle, the Derwent, and last, but not least, the ever-glorious Dove. It was, indeed, a fortunate matter for posterity that the buying and selling of his linen stuffs on Cornhill did not by one jot abate Walton's youthful enthusiasm nurtured amid such opportunities.

But when or where *The Complete Angler* was actually conceived, planned, and written, can only be surmised. Possibly the work had been taking shape in his fancy for many years, to be saved for his leisure on the small estate which he bought near Stafford on his retirement in 1643, where we are told "his companions were some friends, a book, a cheerful heart, and an innocent conscience." What a change from London to a man of his temperament! That city he declared, after he left it, however, to be "a place dangerous for honest men;" and no doubt



The Church at Dovedale

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he was glad to turn his back upon it, since, according to a biographer, "his loyalty had made him obnoxious to the ruling powers." Whatever the circumstances of the actual writing of *The Complete Angler*, that occupation did not prevent Walton's marrying for the second time. That event took place about 1646; the lady he then wedded being Anne, the daughter of Thomas Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells,* one of the seven bishops that were sent to the Tower, and who at the Revolution was deprived of his bishopric, and subsequently died in retirement.

In 1653 the work was published in London, and, as shown on the title-page, a *fac-simile* of which is here produced, was printed by "T. Maxey for Rich. Marriot." No doubt this was the event of Walton's life, and, along with the publication of Hobbes's *Leviathan*, was probably the literary event of that year. In what a quarrelling and fighting time was this most peaceful book brought forth! What a noise and tumult then filled all England! Four years previously, King Charles I. had been executed, — a tragedy which, in the words of John Richard

* Two children only were the issue of this union, — a son and a daughter.

Green, "sent a thrill of horror throughout Europe." Then followed the proclamation of the Commonwealth and Cromwell's invasion of Scotland. The battles of Dunbar and Worcester, in 1650 and 1651 respectively, and the outbreak of the Dutch war in the following year, were events enough to turn the minds of men from contemplative themes and peaceful recreations. Strange, therefore, that this quaint book, with its suggestive sub-title, should have been hatched and given to the world in such a time of clangor and clashing of swords! Stranger still, that it should at once have found such general favor as to make necessary the publication of a second edition two years later. Yet such was the fact, testifying, surely, to the immediate recognition of its rare literary worth, its sterling descriptive beauty, and its compelling fascination.

Something of the immediate popularity of *The Complete Angler* was of course due to its subject, apart from its intrinsic qualities. It was the first really serviceable work on angling ever published in England. Not, indeed, the first "practical" treatise, not even the first "contemplative" book, on the subject of angling; for the honor of the authorship of that unique literary cu-

riosity belongs — here it, ye gallant knights of the angle! — to a lady! This personage was none other than the Dame Juliana Bernars, or Berners, the austere Prioress of the nunnery of Sopwell, near St. Albans. This doughty dame flourished more than a century before Walton's time, and from all accounts was as celebrated for her delight in all true English sport as for her learning and piety, — a female Admirable Crichton in many respects. Of this singular production, called, *The Treatise of Fysshing with an Angle*, or, as it came to be more popularly known after-

The Old Mill at Dovedale.

ward, *The Book of St. Albans*, space will not permit more than a brief extract, as a taste of its quality, and as a sample of her ladyship's kindly views on the subject of the gentle art. In a chapter dealing with the many excellences of fishing as compared with other popular sports of the time, our noble authoress saith: "If in fysshing his sport fail him, the angler atte the leest hath his holsom walke and is mery atte his ease, a swete ayre of the swete savoure of the meede floures that maketh him hungry: he heareth the melodyous armony of fowles: he seeth the young swannes, heerons, duckes, cotes, and many other foules with theyr brodes: whych me seemeth better than alle the noyse of houndys, the blasts of hornes and the scrytt of foules that hunters, fawkeners and fowlers doe make. And if the angler take fysshe, surely, thenne, is there noo man merrier than he is in his apytyte." How much Walton was indebted to Dame Berners's *Treatise*, it is impossible to say, but from one or two correspondences between the two writers, it is obvious that Walton must have been familiar with the book.

A well-known work entitled *The Experienced Angler, or Angling Improved*, written by another famous expert, Colonel Robert

Venables, has sometimes been referred to as having been "drawn upon" by Walton; but this could not have been the case, as *The Complete Angler* was written at least ten years prior to the publication of the other. This erroneous supposition may have obtained because of the fact that a conjoint publication of *The Complete Angler* and *The Experienced Angler* was issued under the title of *The Universal Angler*, to which, in a preface, the initials "I. W." were appended. At all events, Walton's book, with Cotton's contribution embodied, had passed through several editions before the name of Venables was heard of as a writer of authority on the subject of the Gentle Art.

Up to the time, therefore, of the publication of *The Complete Angler*, there was really no work in existence to serve as a *vade-mecum* for those whose favorite sport was "to take fysshe," and for whom "the blastes of hornes and the scrytt of foules" were but —

> "As sounds that sting the tender sense
> With their discordant revel,
> That bid no pain or passion hence,
> But only raise the devil."

There is no wonder that the book was so quickly resorted to on its publication. As

originally issued in 1653, *The Complete Angler* was wholly the work of Izaak Walton, while the next three editions of it, which were published respectively in 1655, 1661, and 1668 (so rapidly did it find favor) received additional chapters from the same pen. "Auceps," one of the brotherhood of the Conference, was not in the first, but was admitted to the second edition. To the fifth edition (1676) a second part was added, the writer of which was Walton's adopted son and brother angler, Charles Cotton, whose personal worth to Walton, on his own testimony at least, has been referred to. Cotton's addition to *The Complete Angler* added very considerably to the value of the work, especially because in its "Instructions how to Angle for a Trout or Grayling in a Clear Stream," much practical tuition in the art of fly-fishing is given to the reader. Walton himself, it is said, had but little proficiency in that branch of the art. As an imitation of his "most worthy father and friend's" literary accomplishment, Cotton's contribution left nothing to be desired; and so the two friends became closely linked together in a renown that will last while rivers run. How suggestive of this is the simple me-

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Izaak Walton

Charles Cotton, Walton's Adopted Son

morial of their friendship, in the quaint interlocking, lover-like, of the initials of their names! Their book was now "complete" in the most literal sense; and no further changes were made upon it by either Walton or Cotton, the former being then in his eighty-third year. Few English classics have passed through so many editions as *The Complete Angler*. Appealing, as it does, to but a limited class of people, the book has had a most unique success since the first edition was published by Mr. Marriott nearly two hundred and fifty years ago, rivalling, in a way, the *Faerie Queene* and the *Pilgrim's Progress* in the departments of poesy and the higher life. Not a year passes now but there are at least several fresh editions or *fac-similes* of it given to the world; and, as I write, I hear of other editions in preparation. "The cry is, 'Still they come!'" thus testifying to the popularity of a work as pure and good in style and manner as ever anything written by an English author, and an author, moreover, whose ordinary occupation had been concerned with bales and invoices and the distracting *et ceteras* of commercial life in the heart of London!

Izaak Walton's title to an honorable seat among the immortals of English lit-

erature was long ago recognized as clear and undisputable. Lord Byron, it is true, sought in his own cavalier fashion to oust the kindly old man from this dignity, and viciously wrote of him that —

> "The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet
> Should have a hook and a small trout to pull it!"

Even the redoubtable "great Cham" took the pains to grunt a dissent to the claims of "the gentle art," as being adapted for only "simple" — i. e., stupid — folks. Dr. Johnson's bark was, however, often more to be feared than his bite; and one edition at least of *The Complete Angler* — that published in 1750 — was due to his sympathy with the book.

But what have the Byrons and Johnsons *et hoc genus omne* to do in an appreciation of this kind? Both were inherently deficient in more than one important quality necessary to make a true angler; and so they discredited a pastime for which the one man had no patience, and the other not over-much of that true Waltonian gentleness that ever shrinks from the jostle of Fleet Street. Unquestionably, "Old Izaak," as his followers delight to call him, has won the regard and reverence of many generations of an-

Cotton's Fishing Cottage, Beresford Dale.

glers throughout the world, not so much because of the literary merit of his book, though that is great, as because of the influence of that rare, restful, humanizing spirit which so largely pervades it. It is for this that *The Complete Angler* occupies, and will in all likelihood continue to do so for many and many a day to come, a unique place among the best of our English literature. One of Walton's earliest biographers (Dr. Zouch) wrote of it: "In this volume of *The Complete Angler*, which will always be read with avidity

even by those who entertain no strong relish for the art which it professes to teach, we discover a copious vein of innocent pleasantry and good humour. The dialogue is diversified with all the characteristic beauties of colloquial composition. The songs and little poems which are occasionally inserted will abundantly gratify the reader who has a taste for the charm of pastoral poetry. Above all, those lovely lessons of religious and moral instruction which are so repeatedly inculcated throughout the whole work, will ever recommend this exquisitely pleasing performance." To all lovers

The Compleat Angler or the Contemplative man's Recreation.

Being a Discourse of
FISH and FISHING,
Not unworthy the perusal of most Anglers.

Simon Peter said, I go a fishing: and they said, We also will go with thee. John 21. 3.

London, Printed by T. Maxey for RICH. MARRIOT, in S. Dunstans Church-yard Fleetstreet, 1653.

Fac-simile of the Plate-page of the First Edition.

of angling, at any rate, it will never cease to be a classic, or to body forth the delightfully unalloyed personality of the writer. Of course few learners have consulted the book for practical guidance. Compared with a really modern handbook of angling, like Stewart's or Pennell's, or that of Francis, *The Complete Angler* is, perhaps, to the followers of that art what, say, the *Book of Tobit* might be, in these days, to evangelical "fishers of men" of the school of Wesley or of Spurgeon. "A quaint and curious volume," in all truth, to be read rather at the fireside than on the road to Loch-Leven or to the Tay. Just imagine a New Brunswick angler harking away over the hills to the Restigouche, expecting, by the help of its lore, to tackle and extract from that prime river a beauty of thirty pounds! Few anglers with these ambitions filling their breasts would ever dream of consulting that venerable volume, with all its kindliness, to know how to fulfil them.

The quaint dialogue form of *The Complete Angler*, by means of which the student is admitted to the secrets of that art, was, perhaps, the best that Walton could have chosen for the exposition of his theme. But, to present-day readers at all

events, the Conferences between "Piscator," "Venator," "Auceps," and the interesting countryfolk they encounter, are at times just a trifle prolonged and tedious, and rather over-weighted with philosophic and sentimental saws. Moreover, they oftentimes lack that spirit or "go" which so distinguishes that capital companion-work to *The Complete Angler*, viz., the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* of Christopher North, our Scottish Walton, one of the keenest and most daring anglers that ever "footed it" over mead or heather, and as ardent a lover of mountain air and the glorious license thereof as ever breathed.*

Yet there is a quality in Walton's writing that overcomes all drawbacks; a quality to which surely no better testimony could be offered than that of Washington Irving in the *Sketch-Book*: "For my part I was always a bungler at all kinds of sport that required either patience or adroitness, and had not angled above half an hour before I had completely 'satisfied the sentiment,' and convinced myself of the truth of Izaak Walton's opinion, that 'angling is something like poetry—a man

* An illustrated article on "Christopher North, the Scottish Walton," by Mr. Cargill, was published in the *Pall Mall Magazine* for November, 1895.

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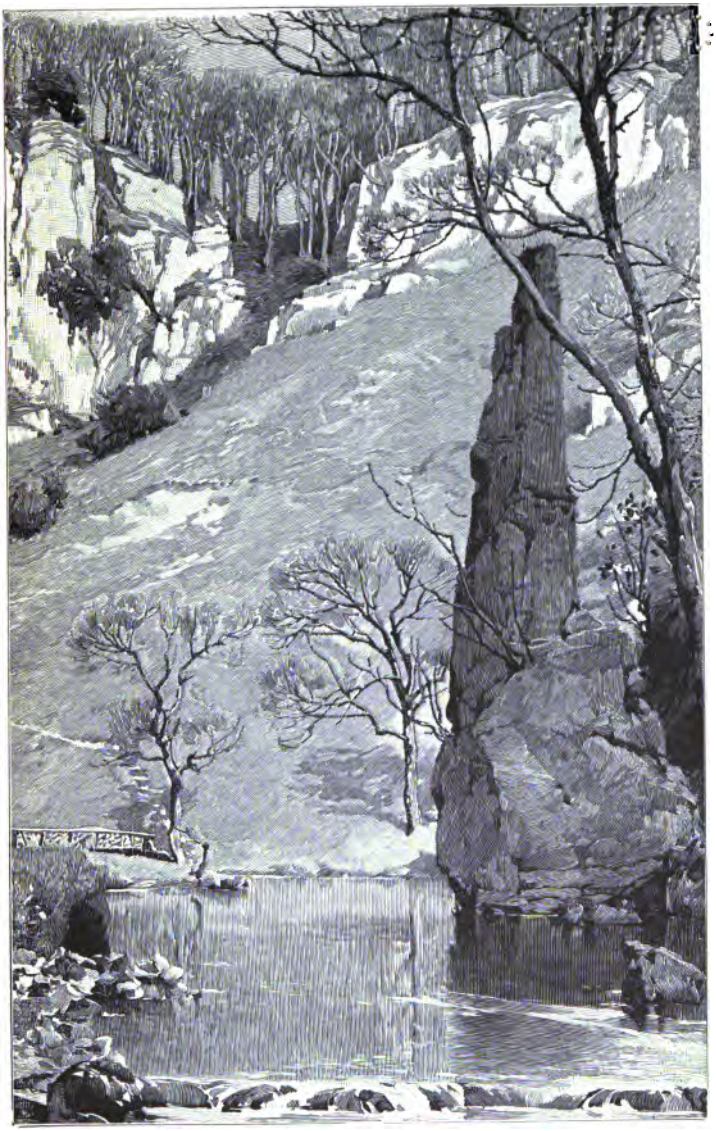

Pike's Pool, Beresford Dale

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must be born to it.' I hooked myself instead of the fish; tangled my line in every tree; lost my bait; broke my rod; until I gave up the attempt in despair, and passed the day under trees reading Old Izaak; satisfied that it was his fascinating vein of honest simplicity and rural feeling that had bewitched me, and not the passion for angling. . . . But, above all, I recollect the 'good, honest, wholesome, hungry' repast which we made under a beech-tree, just by a spring of pure, sweet water that stole out of the side of a hill; and how, when it was over, one of the party read old Izaak Walton's scene with the Milkmaid, while I lay on the grass and built castles in a bright pile of clouds until I fell asleep."

As the more lasting value of Walton's literary achievements belongs to *The Complete Angler*, so, in all probability, will the great mass of his admirers prefer to associate his angling exploits with the Dove rather than with the Lea, or with any other stream which he has made classic. Yet it is both true and strange that in his own part of the pastoral he refers but twice to the Dove, and that quite incidentally. The reason for this is apparently (first), that the *locale* of the pastoral was

away in another part of England, and (secondly), that up to the time of the actual writing of *The Complete Angler*, Walton's familiarity with the famous Derbyshire stream was but little to what it became on the commencement of the friendship between himself and Charles Cotton. It was reserved for Cotton, the writer of the second part of the book, to introduce the unrivalled beauties of the Dove to the notice of the reader, and for him to whet the appetites of generations of anglers for a taste of its pleasures.

Cotton was born in 1630, and was thus just forty-three years the junior of Walton. His father was a man of estate and uncommon mental accomplishments. His mother belonged to a well-known Derbyshire family, which included among its possessions the estates of Beresford and Euson in that county, the former being in close proximity to the quaint old town of Ashbourne (Dr. Johnson, it is said, wrote his *Rasselas* here), and near to the river Dove. Young Cotton was sent to Cambridge about the usual age, where, we are told, "he did not betake himself to any lucrative profession," and, on returning home, "addicted himself to the lighter kind of study, and the improvement of a

Reynard's Cave, Dovedale.

talent in poetry, of which he found himself possessed."

To a youth thus precariously equipped in the matter of profession, and with a love for the Muse, it might readily be imagined how strong were the allurements of such a romantic stream as the Dove, with its manifold and varied windings and picturesque pauses, that added such a charm to the family acres. Here, surely, was ample enough inducement to encourage his "talent." Whatever his actual accomplishment in that line up to the time of his twenty-sixth year, viz., in 1656, there can be no doubt of the fact that in that

year he believed himself to be fully able to maintain a wife; for he then married, albeit "he had neither patrimony nor visible means of subsisting." The lady he espoused was Isabella, daughter of Sir Thomas Hutchison, of Owthorpe, in the county of Nottingham. The death of his father, which occurred about two years afterward, put him in possession of the family estate. From this time forth Cotton appears to have followed a literary vein, the product being chiefly pamphlets, translations, poems on sundry topics, and last, though by no means least, his famous contribution to *The Complete Angler*. But for this last-named accomplishment, the other writings of Cotton must have been long ago forgotten, except, haply, by the antiquarian or relic-hunter. A sample of his skill in verse-making (lines addressed to Aphra Benn, the dramatist) is here given: —

"Some hands write some things well, are elsewhere lame,
But on all themes your powers are the same:
Of buskin and of sock you know the pace
And tread in both with equal skill and grace.
But when you write of love, Astræa, then
Love dips his arrow where you wet your pen.
Such charming lines did never paper grace,
Soft as your sex, and smooth as beauty's face."

This is surely quite in the style of writers of the time of Charles the Second.

When and how Cotton and Walton first became acquainted is only a matter for conjecture, but it was most likely after the publication of the first edition of *The Complete Angler*. The fame of that book had, we may be sure, spread quickly to Derbyshire; and the Beresford family would be among its first readers and warmest admirers. Perhaps the author himself was already known to the elder Cotton, who was then still living; or perhaps an invitation to partake of the Beresford hospitalities — including, of course, a trial of skill on the Dove — had already been proffered and accepted. Be that as it may, Walton's peregrinations to and from this unrivalled angling resort continued at least up till his eighty-third year. Admitted to the full liberty and privacy of that superb stream (a fishing-house was built on its banks expressly to commemorate the friendship of the brother anglers), as it coursed its way through the extensive Beresford demesnes, we can well imagine Walton's thankfulness and delight. Here, mile on mile he might wander, taking as he goes on —

> "Here and there a lusty trout,
> And here and there a grayling,"

his eyes every now and again lighting upon

ome new bit of scenery, such as have made the Peak and its surroundings so famous. At "Pike Pool," for instance, a favorite haunt, we can fancy how young Cotton would venture (a day in April) to give Master Walton a wrinkle or two in the art of fly-fishing, which the latter would receive with all meekness and gratitude. While the old master himself would, in turn, expatiate with gentle but insisting garrulity on the all-important theme "How to angle for *a* trout or grayling in a clear stream." But an imaginary following in the wake of the two worthies of the rod and reel would require an entire idle midsummer day.

The high praise that is the due of *The Complete Angler* cannot be extended to Walton's other writings; though his *Lives* of Dr. Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert, and Bishop Sanderson are, as might be expected from this generous-minded man, models of their kind in point of tenderness of regard and intensity of admiration for their respective subjects. It is only fair to say, however, that this biographical undertaking was in no way the deliberate design of Izaak Walton, but was thrust upon him by a

mere accident, which, according to Major, happened thus: —

"Walton became an author by chance. Sir Henry Wotton had undertaken to write the life of Dr. Donne, and had requested Walton to assist him in collecting materials for that purpose; but Sir Henry dying before it was completed, Walton undertook it himself."

Indeed, it appears, according to the authority of Izaak Walton himself, that Wotton also may have been connected with the suggestion of *The Complete Angler*. "Sir Henry Wotton, a dear lover of this Art, has told me that his intentions were to write a Discourse of the Art, and in praise of angling. And doubtless he had done so, if death had not prevented him; the remembrance of which hath often made me sorry: for if he had lived to do it, then the unlearned Angler had seen some better Treatise of his Art, — a Treatise that might have proved worthy his perusal, which, though some have undertaken, I could never yet see in English." Such is the modest confession of our author as contained in his dedication of *The Complete Angler*, "To the Right Worshipful John Offley, Esq., of Madely

Manor, in the County of Stafford, *My Most Honoured Friend.*"

The claims on the regard of posterity of such men as Dr. Donne, Richard Hooker, and George Herbert will, no doubt, always be held in remembrance; but with respect to men like Sir Henry Wotton or Bishop Sanderson, however highly esteemed these were by their contemporaries, even Walton's pleading can do no more than make us admit all that has been placed on record, both as to their learning and personal worthiness. With Dr. Donne, and when that divine was Dean of Saint Paul's, Walton was on terms of close friendship; and it was possibly on that account that Sir Henry Wotton bequeathed to Walton the unaccomplished task of writing his life. Besides having been a prolific sermon-writer (many of whose "discourses," it may be supposed, were heard by Walton when resident in London), Dr. Donne was the author of a *Discourse on Suicide*, a volume of verse distinguished more for the author's piety and erudition than for poetical force and originality, etc. His merits were such as to have called forth the high encomiums of George Herbert, between whom and Dr. Donne a long-abiding friendship ex-

isted. But with all his accomplishments and opportunities, Donne nevertheless contracted an unhappy marriage, which broke his spirit, and brought his career all too soon to an end; for he was only fifty-eight when he died, when Walton was in his London heyday.

The name of George Herbert needs no recall to all lovers of true religious poetry. The possibility of an association of the writer of

> "Sweet Day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
> The bridal of the earth and sky!"

with the devout and contemplative author of *The Complete Angler*, is strikingly suggestive. And yet, in his introduction to his *Life of Herbert*, Walton admits that he never knew that "saintly writer" personally, and indeed "only saw him once."

For his being included in this remarkable biographical quintette of English worthies, Richard Hooker, the author of the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, is indebted entirely to Walton's admiration for that powerful work, and not, as in the other cases, to any regard for, or personal friendship with, the subject of the *Life*. Hooker died in the year 1600, when only in his forty-seventh year, and when Walton was but a boy of seven.

Taking these *Lives* together, they form a worthy monument of Walton's untiring industry and patient diligence, even in a department of mental activity to which he was but accidentally introduced. The picture of the hale old man, with the more active period of his life left far behind him, yet still finding a zest for existence in the undertaking of these literary engagements, is most interesting. In addition to these writings, brief mention must be made of Walton's ventures in versification (for they were little more, and were chiefly dedicatory "lines" or epistles). His stanzas on the death of Dr. Donne are perhaps the best example of his skill in this department, though they were written when in the full vigor of his days, as were also his "*Verses* to the author of the *Synagogue*, printed along with Herbert's *Temple*, *Verses* in prefacing the poems of (1) Alexander Browne (1646); of (2) Shirley (1646); and (3) of Cartwright (1651). His last effort was a prefatory poem in praise of the author of *Thealma and Clearclues*, a pastoral history in smooth and easy verse by John Chalkhill, Esq." Even as the production of a person of almost nonagenarian age, it is a very creditable performance: coming from the pen of good old Izaak,

it is, of course, most worthy of regard. One needs to follow his career but a little farther, and note — in his Last Will and Testament — that he has at length (Aug. 9, 1683) arrived at his ninetieth milestone on life's highway, fast nearing his journey's end, but still blest with "perfect memory, for which God be praised." A few months later his steps falter and fail altogether.

His death took place at Winchester, on the 15th day of December in the same year, while he was staying with Dr. Hawkins, prebendary of the Cathedral, within the precincts of which his remains were buried. The following is the inscription, on a large black flat marble stone, to his memory: —

HERE RESTETH THE BODY OF
MR. ISAAC WALTON
WHO DYED THE 15TH OF DECEMBER
1683.

ALAS! HE'S GONE BEFORE
GONE TO RETURN NO MORE
OUR PANTING BREASTS ASPIRE
AFTER THEIR AGED SIRE,
WHOSE WELL-SPENT LIFE DID LAST
FULL NINETY YEARS AND PAST
BUT NOW HE HATH BEGUN
THAT WHICH WILL NE'ER BE DONE
CROWNED WITH ETERNAL BLISS
WE WISH OUR SOULS WITH HIS.

VOTIS MODESTIS SIC FLERUNT LIBERI!

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW

AN INITIAL FINE OF 25 CENTS
WILL BE ASSESSED FOR FAILURE TO RETURN
THIS BOOK ON THE DATE DUE. THE PENALTY
WILL INCREASE TO 50 CENTS ON THE FOURTH
DAY AND TO $1.00 ON THE SEVENTH DAY
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